



USAID Alumni Association

October 2025 Newsletter

Note from the UAA Board

One year ago, as our 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) concluded, the Board's concerns included increasing the number of UAA members, expanding our ever-popular Mentoring Program with USAID, improving outreach to former USAID FSNs, building UAA regional programs outside the Washington metro area, and quickly engaging with the new Administration. We had a number of group mentoring and coaching calls with Mission Directors and Deputy Directors, providing ideas and insights on navigating the transition from one Administration to another. No one predicted the total dismantling of the Agency, and the subsequent chaos, disruption and dismay that followed.

The UAA joined other groups and individuals that pushed for Congressional action, at the same time increasing our outreach beyond the DC metro area to the Northeast, North Carolina, Florida, and California. We organized a network and joined with other organizations to set up welcome home and meet-and-greet events for our colleagues returning from overseas. We established an emergency fund to provide short term financial support for recently dismissed USAID staff. We have joined other organizations and individuals to discuss assistance strategy, structures and skills needed to implement programs. UAA's knowledge management program team has focused on ensuring that the knowledge, skills, and experiences of USAID FSNs in particular are captured before these subject matter experts move on to new employment opportunities or to a new field entirely.

UAA's 2025 AGM is intended to provoke a deep discussion on the future, considering USAID no longer exists. If you are planning on attending the AGM and have not yet registered, please do so. Our venue at the Center

for Global Development has limited capacity for in-person participation but can accommodate large numbers virtually. Links are contained in the article below. We want to hear your voices and opinions. See you there!

Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

On **Tuesday, October 7, 2025**, from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM, the UAA Development Issues Committee will host a **virtual discussion with Tod Preston, Executive Director of the Managing Foreign Assistance Network, to discuss MFAN's "Consensus Principles & Recommendations for the Future of U.S. International Assistance."** A deeper dive on MFAN's recommendations is timely as we prepare for UAA's Annual General Meeting, in which we will discuss future directions for international cooperation and a role for our organization. The discussion will be open to all UAA members who have made a 2025 contribution. Registration is now closed. All those who registered will be sent an Email with information on how to join the Zoom meeting on or about Monday, October 6.

New! An in-person **UAA Annual General Meeting (AGM)** will be held **Friday, October 31**, at the Center for Global Development (CGD) at 2055 L St NW in Washington, D.C. Members who prefer to attend virtually and those who live outside the Washington, DC area will be able to join via Zoom. The meeting will begin at 9:00 am, with in-person attendees provided coffee and snacks at 8:30. The meeting will end at 1:30 followed by lunch for in-person attendees.

Please see the article below to access the updated agenda, speakers' bios, and links for in person and virtual registration.

UAA Annual General Meeting

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Please [click here](#) for the full agenda and [here](#) for the speaker bios. To register to attend the Annual General Meeting in person or via Zoom your 2025 contributions must have been received by the UAA treasurer. Those whose dues have not been received by October 15, 2025 will not be able to register. You can check whether you have made your 2025 contribution [here](#). If you have not yet made your 2025 contribution, please do so now by clicking [here](#).

Registration: Registration will end on October 19. You will receive an email acknowledgement of your registration for the meeting. For those attending virtually, the Zoom link for the meeting will be sent after

registration closes. For those planning to attend in person, there is a 130-person limit given the CGD conference room's available space and only a few spaces are still available.

Please [click here to register to attend the AGM in person](#).

[Click here to attend the AGM virtually](#).

What's New on the UAA Website

In Memoriam:

Thomas Hamlin Reese III, Lestine Rebecca "Tess" Johnston, Geswaldo "Joe" Verrone

NOTE: Bulletin Board and Article entries during the last month have been too numerous to list all of them here, so only a few that deserve special mention and did not receive wide distribution follow. For those interested in seeing more, please follow these links:

- 1) [Bulletin Board](#)
- 2) [Articles](#)

Bulletin Board

- **The DACOR/ LAC Discussion Group lunch with the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Hon. Albert Ramdin, has been re-scheduled for Friday, October 10.**
- **Remembering USAID Through the Arts**
"Remembering USAID Through the Arts" is an exciting new initiative to celebrate USAID's global development work. It will mobilize funds to support the establishment of a multi-media art repository. Artists from USAID, implementing partners, family and friends will exhibit and sell their art, and donate proceeds to this effort. [Click here](#) for a summary and [Click Here](#) for the full prospectus.
- **The William R. Rivkin Award for a dissent channel memo was awarded at an AFSA award ceremony to ten USAID employees who advocated for the work of USAID on October 1, 2025.**
- **MFAN Statement on the Administration's New Global Health Strategy.** 26 Sep 2025
- **Latest from AID Transition Alliance, 19 Sep 2025**

- **America First Global Health Strategy Fact Sheet, U.S. Dept. of State, 18 Sep 2025**

Articles

(Click on the "Articles" link above for more articles posted on our website. Click on the boldface item headings there and below for a hyperlink to the full article or video.)

- **Ex-USAID Worker Mourns Agency's Fate.** By Alex Thomas, Arkansas Democratic Gazette. 28 Sep 2025
- **The Tax on Being a Girl.** Opinion by Nicholas Kristof, The New York Times, 27 Sep 2025
- **Henrietta Fore Speaks Favorably of Merger of State and AID.** Devex Newswire, 26 Sep 2025
- **Aid program must return to its roots.** By Axel Dreher, China Daily Global, 15 Sep 2025
- **Former A/AID Mark Green urges development community "to refocus and rebuild."** By Helen Murphy, Devex Newswire, 24 Sep 2025
- **History and Impact of USAID Programs, compiled by Joseph B. Goodwin, Ph.D., former USAID Mission Director,** September 10, 2025
- **A Maternity Ward Reaches Its Breaking Point as U.S. Aid Dries Up.** By Ruth Maclean, The New York Times, 21 Sep 2025
- **Trump's Most Lethal Policy.** Opinion by Nicholas Kristof reporting from Uganda, The New York Times, 20 Sep 2025
- **Fixing Foreign Aid Requires Confronting Fundamental Tensions.** By Dennis Vega and Daphne McCurdy, Foreign Policy, 15 Sep 2025
- **State Department Lacks Critical Functions to Effectively Manage and Operate U.S. Foreign Aid Portfolio, New Analysis Warns.** MFAN, 10 Sep 2025
- **On the ground with children affected by US aid cuts.** By Anna Gawel, Devex Newswire, 5 Sep 2025

Jobs & Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities with Acting Globally

Acting Globally, a US-based nonprofit, invites development professionals to join our volunteer team helping civil society organizations in low-income countries expand access to education, healthcare and safe communities. We're currently providing technical assistance and seed grants to grassroots groups in seven countries across Africa and Asia — fostering change without relying on government funding. Learn more and meet our team at acting-globally.org. To express interest in joining us, please contact our founder, Martin Levine, at martin@acting-globally.org.
Re-posted Sept. 29, 2025

The National War College Alumni Association is seeking a new Executive Director

The Executive Director will oversee the daily activities of the Alumni Association, manage the support staff, and act as a liaison between National War College alumni and the College leadership. The executive director serves as a Board Member of the National War College Alumni Association, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

This is a full-time position, in the Alumni Office in Roosevelt Hall on Ft. McNair, in Washington, DC. The salary range for this role is between \$100,000 and \$150,000. Preference for National War College Alumni or those with experience in alumni relations. [Click here](#) for a detailed job description. For more information and to apply for this position, please contact Richard Jaskot at richard.jaskot@gmail.com.

The Partnership for Public Service offers a Guide for Navigating the Federal Deferred Resignation Program

[Click here to access the guide.](#)

Camp Soles is searching for an Executive Director

Camp Soles in Rockwood, PA, provides high quality and affordable overnight, family camp, and retreat programs. Located in the Laurel Highlands of southwestern Pennsylvania, its 200+ acre facility is recognized by many as one of the most beautiful family camps in North America. It is now looking for a new Executive Director. [Click here](#) for the job description and [click here](#) for key information about Camp Soles and how to apply.

Rotary Club Peace Award to USAID



On September 24, thirty USAID California alumni received the Berkeley Rotary Peace Award. 175 Berkeley Rotarians honored USAID's decades of global Peace efforts. UC Berkeley Chancellor Lyons and Berkeley Mayor Ishii commended USAID for its countless contributions in international development and humanitarian assistance, including critical research. A USAID Peace Tree was planted in Berkeley's Tilden Park,

alongside those for past recipients like Nelson Mandela.

On behalf of USAID, UAA's Christine Sheckler, a UC Berkeley graduate, proudly received the Berkeley Rotary Peace Award certificate from Berkeley Rotary Organizer, Maxim Schrogin.

UAA Florida Regional Chapter welcomes former USAID staff to Florida



On September 9th the Foreign Service Retiree Association (FSRA), soon to be renamed Foreign Service Alumni Association (FSAA) of Florida held their meeting in Delray Beach on Florida's east coast. Many of the 35 participants, mostly from the southern half of the state, were former employees of USAID, recently returning to live and work in Florida following the shutdown of the Agency. The AFSA-affiliated FSAA organization is in the process of changing from a state-wide group of about 400 retired Foreign Service Officers from the five foreign affairs agencies to an alumni association of professionals having worked in diplomacy and development under the auspices of the USG. In partnership with UAA's pioneering Florida Chapter, we are growing and adapting to the needs and preferences of a larger, younger and more diverse group. [Click here](#) for the full article.

USAID Staff Financial Support Fund needs your help

"Well received and unbelievably grateful!"

"Just wanted to thank you and all at UAA."

"I received the grant funds today. It is great timing for some moving expenses that are coming due, and I can't thank you guys enough for the support. Wishing you the best as we all navigate through these times..."

These are just a few of the many notes of thanks the UAA has received from former USAID staff who have received \$2000 grants from UAA's fund. While the fund has received over \$260,000 in donations and has approved over 100 grants, we are nearing the end of our current level of resources. The amount we need to cover the number of outstanding eligible applications exceeds the fund's balance, and we continue to receive new applications given that many RIFs occurred

September 2. We have set a goal of \$500,000 so that we can meet the overall demand that we expect.

We encourage all UAA members who have not donated to do so. Remember that donations may be tax deductible given UAA's 501(c)(3) status, and that the fund can accept qualified charitable distributions from an IRA. Here is the link to donate: [Donate to USAID Staff Financial Support Fund](#). And to those new members who may be eligible for grants, use this link to apply: [USAID Staff Financial Support Fund Application Guidelines Survey](#). If you have any questions about the fund, please send them to: uaafund2025@gmail.com

USAID Knowledge Rescue

USAID's legacy includes research, data, photos, human interest stories, and collective expertise accumulated over the last six decades of the Agency's work. Recognizing the urgent need to locate, preserve, and share these resources, the UAA has teamed up with the [Aid Transition Alliance](#) (AtA) to collect materials to create a free, searchable database. [Join our LinkedIn Group to stay up to date](#).

So far, we've collected 145,393 resources and received individual interview requests from 140 former staff. [Share materials you want included in the database](#). You can also request materials with the same link. If you would like to be considered for an interview, please complete [our expression of interest form](#), and we'll contact you directly.

Our individual interviews will start in earnest in October, with up to 60 interviews per month. We also are testing an approach to carrying out group discussions on specific approaches, methodologies and tools; the first two (Nature, and Power/Natural Resource Management; and Political Economy Analysis/Thinking Politically) will be piloted later in October, and others will be rolled out later in the year.

Bibliography of USAID Authors

Several intriguing books have been added to the Bibliography of USAID Authors.

Cheema JK. The Black Attache. 2023. Caumet Editions, ISBN-10.1960250809. This is a blend of history, travelogue and reflections in the form of short vignettes from Cheema's life. Cheema shares her memories from the events she experienced during the India-Pakistan partition to her growing up in India, nearly dying on the last train out from Lahore, Pakistan. It covers her very lengthy and unusual career with USAID. After 25 years overseas, including several consultancies, she retired to Madison, Wisconsin. The Black Attache is the first of her two books sharing her life. It is a snapshot of a young girl born in India, aspiring to make a difference in the world and doing so as a foreign service officer with USAID.

Bloeser, Bee. *Vaccines and Bayonets: A Historical Memoir*. 2021. ISBN-10. 1127878564. This is a very topical chronicle of the challenges for USAID and CDC experts (and their wives and children) as they eradicated smallpox in Central Africa in the heart of the Cold War. Ms. Bloeser says she enjoys zooming with book clubs.

Waak, Patricia. *Memories of Africa: Coming Home. Poetry and Prose*. 2025. Independently Published. ISBN-13. 979-8298472258e

Waak, Patricia. *My Bones are Red: A Spiritual Journey with a Triracial People in the Americas*. 2005. Mercer Univ. Press. ISBN: 9780865549173

These are two of six books authored by Patricia Waak, who served in the Office of Population for 6 years. A major Audubon contributor, she has also been Democratic Party chair for Colorado.

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

Development Dialogues

DACOR: Liz Schraye on "How America Wins in the World"



On Tuesday, September 30, 2025, USGLC President and CEO Liz Schraye spoke to a sell-out luncheon audience at DACOR. She backed up her talk's ambitious title, "How America Wins in the World," by citing a number of recent important USGLC accomplishments in addressing today's challenges and by setting out a program of ideas for further building support for development cooperation throughout the nation and in Congress. Many of these ideas are included in the USGLC's recent report linked [here](#). She welcomed the suggestion for close cooperation with UAA in support of common objectives. At Ms. Schraye's request

the program was not recorded.

Dr. Homi Kharas on "From Aid-Driven to Investment-Driven Models of Sustainable Development"

The Development Issues Committee hosted a discussion on September 9 with Dr. Homi Kharas, Senior Fellow with the Center for Sustainable Development at the Brookings Institution. Dr. Kharas presented his co-



authored paper, "From Aid-Driven to Investment-Driven Models of Sustainable Development." The paper argues that development finance should be based on estimates of financial needs for environmentally sustainable development in Emerging and Developing Economies in an inter-connected world and that both public and private resources should be mobilized to address these needs. Identified needs include health and education, physical infrastructure, resilience, biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture.

Profile: Dottie Rayburn



Dottie's initial interest in international development was sparked by the commencement speech by the first Peace Corps Director, Sargent Shriver, at her high school graduation. After college she embraced a career immersed in international development with the Peace Corps, U.S. Congress, State Department, and USAID. Following two+ years as a PCV teacher in the Philippines, she moved to Capitol Hill for five years as Congressional staff. Back at Peace Corps HQ (1975-1981) Dottie became Chief of Operations for the North Africa, Middle East, Asia, and Pacific Regions. She served five years at the then U.S. Information Agency and earned a law degree at American University. In 1987, Dottie found her professional home in USAID's Office of

Legislative Affairs, where she represented USAID on the Hill until February 2025, except for an eight-year stint at State during the Obama Administration and a break in 2014.

At USAID, Dottie specialized in the budget and appropriations process and developed close relationships with Members and staff on both sides of the aisle, enabling her to help secure Congressional support for many key initiatives. Illustratively, she pursued maintaining bipartisan Congressional support for the sensitive undertaking of getting humanitarian supplies into Afghanistan to support the families of Afghans fighting the Soviet invasion. Dottie worked with Congress on passage of legislation to build the economies of Eastern European countries following the fall of the Berlin Wall. Her international travel with Members and staff often helped gain Congressional support. In the wake of the devastating 2004 Tsunami that swept the Indian Ocean, USAID led on both response and reconstruction efforts, but the price tag was high. After seeing first-hand how USAID was leading the response effort on the ground,

Congress passed a supplemental which helped to rebuild Aceh in Indonesia, fostering an atmosphere of trust that led to a peace process ending years of civil conflict engulfing that region.

Since fully retiring in February 2025, Dottie remains an active advocate on the Hill for USAID and its staff. In September, she organized a panel on Capitol Hill of ten recently returned Mission Directors to discuss the devastating impact of the withdrawal of USAID. Dottie divides her time between Washington and Bethany, DE. Her various activities include gardening, birdwatching, walking, reading, as well as spending time with family, and traveling. Dottie also meets local food and housing needs in the D.C. area - through her volunteer engagement with Martha's Table, Central Union Mission, and Habitat for Humanity. She welcomes opportunities to catch up with friends and colleagues and to offer guidance to young people interested in careers in international development. Her email is dottierayburn@gmail.com.

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