

FS Direct



Direct Communication to Foreign Service Employees and Family Members
Published by the Family Liaison Office, Department of State
September 2003

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FS DIRECT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Welcome to the September 2003 edition of **FS Direct**. To keep the publication user-friendly and simple, we have listed the articles in the sidebar to the left. Simply click on those items you are interested in reading. Subscribe using the following links:

Internet: <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c9156.htm>

Intranet:

<http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/FLO/FLOSubscription.html>

Via AAFSW: Visit the FLO area of the AAFSW web site at <http://www.aafsw.org> and click on FLO newsletters.

FS Direct is also available one week after publication on the FLO Internet web site at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/c5709.htm>



FROM FLO DIRECTOR FAYE BARNES

The dog days of summer are almost gone and we are preparing for the month of training intensively! Our first Community Liaison Office Coordinator (CLO) training session begins September 10th, followed by training for our SNAP pilot local employment advisors on September 22-26, followed by the second CLO training conference on October 1. The Columbus Day weekend will offer a welcome respite to this back-to-back training!

We are pleased to announce the arrival of Donna Ayerst, our new Publications Coordinator. Donna, spouse of a USAID officer, returned from Maputo, Mozambique, where she was the CLO, and began working in FLO on August 11th. We are delighted to have her on staff since she brings fresh field experience and perspective to the office after

serving as CLO in Kigali and Maputo, as well as earlier stints as CLO in New Delhi and Quito.

I hope you enjoy this first issue of *FSDirect* under Donna's editorship.

Click Your Way to More FLO Resources:

FLO Homepage on the Intranet

<http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/flo/index.html>

FLO Homepage on the Internet

<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo>



FAMILY MEMBER EMPLOYMENT

- **(New)** Apply Now for Domestic Hard-to-Fill Vacancies with Department of State—Deadline September 15, 2003 <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/9859.htm>
- **(Updated)** Retirement for Foreign Service Spouses Who Have Worked in Government Positions Overseas <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/23064.htm>
- **(Updated)** New Bilateral Work Agreement with Tajikistan <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/16261.htm>



EDUCATION AND YOUTH

- **(New)** Youth are the World's Future Diplomats--Foreign Service Youth Tell their Stories on the Department of State's New Web Site <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c10036.htm>



SUPPORT SERVICES

- **(Updated)** Adoption Guidelines is currently under revision—please go to FLO's internet site <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c9156.htm> for the latest update on publication date.
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Not-to-be-Missed Information:



FAMILY MEMBER EMPLOYMENT

DOMESTIC HARD-TO-FILL OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE—DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 15

EFMs who were employed on a Family Member Appointment (FMA) or a TEMP appointment overseas are now eligible to bid on, and temporarily fill, Foreign Service positions in the Department of State. (See FLO's Hiring Mechanism paper at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/21936.htm> for definitions of FMA and TEMP).

The Family Liaison Office, in conjunction with all functional and geographic bureaus in the Department of State, has assembled a list of unfilled domestic Foreign Service vacancies. State cable 237925, 2003 Domestic Hard-to-Fill Program for Family Members, listing jobs and application procedures, may be viewed on the FLO Intranet web site at <http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/flo/CLO/cables.html>. Candidates must have been employed in an FMA or TEMP position for 52 weeks or more, earned Executive Order Eligibility (EOE), and hold a current security clearance. (See EOE information on the FLO web site at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/2093.htm>.)

Deadline for application is September 15, 2003. For further information, all qualified EFMs interested in filling these substantive jobs on a two-year temporary appointment to the Civil Service should email FLOAskEmployment@state.gov with their contact information, including email address.

FOREIGN SERVICE EXAM PREPARATION

If you are wondering how to prepare for the Foreign Service exam, a test sample and guidance on what to know and what to study can be found in the 2003 Foreign Service Written Examination registration book available online at <http://www.careers.state.gov/officer/regbooklet.html>

Regarding the Specialist Oral Assessment, a good understanding of American culture, events and history is important. The candidate will also be asked questions pertinent to the specialty applied for and will be required to write an essay.

DISTANCE LEARNING LANGUAGE LESSONS

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) School of Language Studies currently offers a limited number of beginner (starting Sept. 15) and advanced (starting Sept. 29) language courses online in German, Greek, Korean, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. For a list of prerequisites, registration instructions and more information, please email onlinelanguage@state.gov.

JOB SEEKERS NETWORK GROUP FOR FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY MEMBERS IN DC AREA

The **Job Seekers Network Group** is for Washington, DC area Foreign Service family members who are committed to a job search. Whether looking for Federal employment or employment outside of government, searching for a job can be a challenge. Successful job searches require time, energy, information, skills, and the motivation to get started and keep going! The Network Group serves to keep you informed of new job search information, help to keep you motivated, and to put you in touch with others seeking employment. The idea is to share information, contacts, tips, and offer support. For more information and schedule of meetings, email FLOAskEmployment@state.gov

BRINGING YOUR NANNY TO THE UNITED STATES

Career Foreign Service Personnel returning from overseas may employ a nanny from abroad provided that (as stated in [9 FAM 41.31 N6.3-2](#) *Servants of U.S. Citizens on Temporary Assignment in United States*).

- The nanny qualifies for an annotated B1/B2 visa to enter the U.S.;
- The nanny has a contract with the employer to be presented at the port of entry;
- The nanny's salary will be minimum or prevailing wage (whichever is greater) in your metropolitan area (see cable 97889 dated 4/16/2003);
- The employer is on a temporary assignment in the U.S. of not more than four years.

Furthermore, the nanny should have been in the service of the FS employer at least six months prior to arrival in the U.S. If the employer chooses to hire someone who has not been in his or her service previously, the employer must prove that a nanny was employed in his or her household on a regular basis. The new employee must demonstrate that he or she has at least a year's experience in the same position. (Domestic household help also can be brought to the U.S. under the same provisions.)

At the point of entry into the United States, the Immigration Officer issues an I-94, which is usually stapled into the household worker's passport. Upon entering the United States, your household worker should inform the inspecting officer that he or she is part of the diplomat's household staff and requests admission for a six-month period. As noted above, the household worker should also present an original copy of the employment contract at the port of entry. Pay attention to the expiration date on the I-94. This tells the entrant what date he/she must depart the country. To extend the I-94, the household worker has to file an I-539 form, "Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status" prior to the expiration date.

After the nanny successfully enters the U.S, he or she must apply for and obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS-formerly INS), and a Social Security Number. The employer is required to pay into the employee's social security account.

For a more detailed description of these complicated procedures, please access <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/17026.htm>



FOREIGN SERVICE YOUTH FOUNDATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The following Washington-based events are being publicized by the Foreign Service Youth Foundation.

September 21 Welcome Back Family Picnic, Lubber Run Park

The Foreign Service Youth Foundation sponsors the AWAL (ages 13-19) and Globe Trotters (ages 9-12) youth development programs for Foreign Service kids who share the experience of living overseas. New members (whether you are returning from overseas, starting A-100 or have been in DC for awhile) are always welcome to join in the fun!

For information about the Foreign Service Youth Foundation, AWAL and Globe Trotters, contact the Foreign Service Youth Foundation at tel: (301) 404-6655, email: fsyf@fsyf.org, or through their web Site: <http://www.fsyf.org>.

FOREIGN SERVICE YOUTH AWARDS & KIDVID AWARDS

The **Foreign Service Youth, AFSA Essay Contest, and KidVid Awards** were presented on Friday, August 15, in the Treaty Room at the Department of State. Remarking that his own children had had to make many moves during his military career, keynote speaker **Secretary of State Colin L. Powell** acknowledged the many contributions made by Foreign Service youth around the world. He stated how proud he is of ALL of his young ambassadors both here and abroad.

It's not too early to start thinking about next year's nominations!

NEW AT POST?

A big welcome to those of you who have just moved overseas from a stateside assignment! Perhaps one thing that's new since the last time you were overseas is the **extensive FLO web site**. We hope that you will familiarize yourselves with the entire FLO web site, but be sure to remember that the Education and Youth site at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c1958.htm> has been established for you to address educational issues of concern to Foreign Service families.

Here are some web sites for students as well: kids can check out FLO's section on **Homework Helpers** at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/1994.htm>. Older students might want to read about **High School and College Considerations for Foreign Service Youth** <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/14301.htm> with some great links to help with

college planning. This site is always growing to respond to your needs - send in your favorite links!

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

By Rebecca Grappo, FLO Education and Youth Officer

School has begun and right now the end of the year seems far away. However, I'd like to pass along some advice for all high school students. It is highly recommended that you **maintain a binder of all the course outlines for the classes you take throughout your high school career**. Why you might ask? We have learned that when high school students return to the U.S. there are occasional questions regarding courses taken, credit hours conferred, and how they match up with graduation requirements with other schools, especially stateside high schools. If there is a problem interpreting transcripts, some students are interviewed by international registrars who might ask you what you learned in a particular course taken in the past - even years ago. The answer "I don't know" or "I don't remember" won't cut it! How much better to whip open that binder and rattle off everything you covered in a course. Think I'm making this up? One scenario happened to an evacuee who thought she would graduate overseas but couldn't, and the other to a student returning to the U.S. for senior year from a non-American school. Keeping your old notes is also a good idea - the state standardized tests are now a requirement for graduation in Virginia. If you need to take a Standards of Learning test (SOL) retroactively after the end of a course, you'll be in a lot better shape if you can refer to old notes. So keep your outlines and notes in a safe place - it's like having an insurance policy in the bank! If you have any questions on this topic, write to me at FLOAskEducation@state.gov



SUPPORT SERVICES

IMMEDIATE BENEFIT PLAN—LAST CHANCE TO ENROLL! OPEN SEASON ENDS OCTOBER 1, 2003

For the cost of a can of Pringles – just \$2 per pay period, Department of State employees can purchase the **Immediate Benefit Plan** and guarantee loved ones financial security in the days immediately following the death of the employee. While most insurance plans and benefits take six to eight weeks to process, the Immediate Benefit Plan pays \$15,000 to the designated beneficiary(ies) of an enrollee within just two work days of official notification of death. This new insurance program, offered by the American Foreign Service Protective Association, is open to all U.S. citizen Foreign Service and Civil Service employees, including employees on an FMA or PSA Plus. Sign up now to protect those you care about most. For more information, visit <http://www.afspa.org> and click on "Immediate Benefit Plan" or email oca@state.gov or redyja@state.gov. Enrollment forms can be downloaded from AFSPA's web site and may be submitted by fax or mail. Open Season for enrollments ends on October 1, 2003, so take a minute and enroll now.

SHIPMENT TRACKING: “WHERE IS MY SHIPMENT?” NEW INTRANET SITE FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

In a continuing effort to improve customer service, A/LM/OPS/TTM--the Office of Logistics Management--recently announced a new intranet site that will allow a State Department employee to track the status of their Household Effects (HHE), Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB), Privately Owned Vehicle (POV), and Consumable (CNS) shipments. In addition, employees will be able to view the net and gross weights of their items in storage.

To take advantage of this program, you must have access to the Intranet, provide your Social Security Number (SSN), and the type of shipment. At present, information on post-originated moves, domestic moves or shipments to Canada and Mexico is unavailable but should be available by early next year.

“Where is My Shipment?” is available now on the Intranet at <http://almposttm.a.state.gov/shipments/disclaimer.asp>

POST REPORTS NOW AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET

Department of State Post Reports are written for U.S. Government employees and family members assigned to diplomatic missions abroad and provide information about living, housing, and health conditions, as well as recreational, cultural, and employment opportunities for family members in the host country. They also provide an overview of the history, geography, demography, and political organization of the country, and specific information that is only applicable to U.S. Government employees on foreign assignment. To view Post Reports go to Internet site <http://www.foia.state.gov>



PUBLICATIONS

FLO LAUNCHES NEW SUBSCRIPTION DATABASE

For those individuals with Intranet access, it is now possible to subscribe to FLO publications online at <http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/flo/FLOSubscription.html>.

For those who have Internet access, subscribe to FLO publications online at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c9156.htm>.

The following FLO publications are available:

FS Direct - a newsletter for the Foreign Service community, emailed to subscribers bi-monthly.

The Network - a newsletter for Foreign Service family members seeking employment in the Washington, DC area, published monthly.

Global Employment Connections - a newsletter covering current information, resources, and job search strategies to help build a global career in a mobile lifestyle. It also features real-life success stories from spouses in the global workforce as well as employment advice from family members who want to share their lessons learned with others.