

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# STATE

SPECIAL REPORT:  
EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI

MARCH 2010

MAGAZINE

## Hope in Haiti



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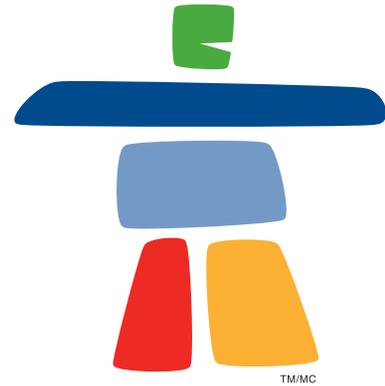
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# Department Teams Respond To Haitian Crisis

More than 100,000 people from more than 20 countries died in the devastating earthquake in Haiti, including members of our own Foreign Service community—American and Haitian. We grieve with those who have lost family and friends. In Washington, D.C., and around the world our employees have responded with an outpouring of emergency and humanitarian assistance and services to alleviate the suffering of others. On behalf of the Department, I would like to express my appreciation for all of these efforts.

Many colleagues have played critical roles that helped save lives in the aftermath of this disaster. Our colleagues in Haiti worked nonstop to coordinate relief efforts with the Government of Haiti, contributing nations, other U.S. government agencies and nongovernmental organizations. One hundred and sixty temporary-duty State Department employees from Washington and posts throughout the world traveled to Haiti to assist. Officers and their Haitian colleagues in the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince threw themselves night and day into efforts to help Americans in need, even when their own homes were in shambles. Thanks in great measure to their extraordinary efforts to evacuate American citizens, more than 14,000 people were able to reach safety in the United States. Officers at U.S. Embassies in Santo Domingo, Nassau and Kingston also assisted official and private U.S. citizen evacuees. The U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo further supported the enormous volume of U.S.-government and private-assistance resources moving through the Dominican Republic to Haiti. In response to urgent calls for donations for our Foreign Service Nationals, embassy staff around the world organized bake sales, charity breakfasts and luncheons. Members of the Foreign Affairs family have been contributing very generously to our local colleagues in Haiti—enough to provide \$100 in cash to each employee within days of the profound damage. These are just a few examples of the extraordinary efforts by our employees around the world and in Washington.

Here at home, Department employees were eager to assist as well. Employees from bureaus throughout the Department volunteered to staff our round-the-clock Haiti task forces. Along with the central coordinating task force, these employees responded to private U.S. citizen inquiries about locating loved ones and completing adoptions of Haitian orphans. Employees also provided strategic messaging to embassies worldwide; planned for Haiti's

longer-term recovery needs; handled public, private and foreign governments' offers of assistance; and worked toward a strategy to support vulnerable children in Haiti. These task forces were staffed by Civil Service and Foreign Service employees, contractors and retired annuitants, representing nearly every Department bureau.

Immediately following the earthquake, colleagues in our Office of Casualty Assistance and Family Liaison Office began tracking the status of official Americans, activating the Crisis Support Team members to staff the task force for three days. FLO staff provided

guidance to the evacuees, and members of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide met evacuees at the airport, provided them with clothing, toiletries and car seats, and took them shopping. FLO was the primary contact for all queries regarding official Americans, and OCA was the primary point of contact for the families of individuals who had been killed or injured. OCA coordinated with other offices and agencies on the transportation of remains, including military arrival ceremonies.

The evacuation of Americans from Haiti required close cooperation among our people on the ground in Haiti and Santo Domingo, the Bureau of Consular Affairs, the U.S. military, and the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services. More than 14,000 people owe their safety and security to that effort. State worked with our interagency partners as a team to respond to these critical needs.

Currently, we are engaged in an active effort to collect funds for the FSN Emergency Relief Fund, which the Department established to respond to crisis or humanitarian requests on behalf of all FSNs working for the United States Government. If you would like further information about the FSN Emergency Relief Fund, please see the recent State ALDAC cable 00003587 (dated 01/14/10) or contact the gift fund coordinator by e-mail at [bordleyds@state.gov](mailto:bordleyds@state.gov) or by fax at (202) 647-8194.

If you have any general comments or suggestions, including topics you would like to see addressed in this column, please feel free to send them to me via unclassified e-mail at [DG Direct](mailto:DG Direct). ■



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Nancy J. Powell".

Nancy J. Powell  
Director General

# Embassies' Help Praised

As parents of a daughter who was in Haiti for the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator when the earthquake struck, my husband and I want to send a heartfelt note of gratitude to the staff at the U.S. Embassy in Haiti, to the extended embassy community in Santo Domingo and to colleagues here in Washington for all of their efforts on behalf of the earthquake evacuees.

We felt strongly supported by the many people who did their best to help our daughter, Annie Wanlund, and keep us informed. In Washington, we were constantly in touch with Annie's incredibly supportive office. The Operations Center and Haiti Earthquake Task Force were always responsive, and the Family Liaison Office staff was superb, contacting us whenever a relevant development occurred.

Despite the chaos and incredible workload at the U.S. Embassy in Haiti, Judith Timyan of the U.S. Agency for International Development and Trudy Wong-You, a family member employee coordinating evacuation efforts, helped locate Annie and let us know when she was likely to be evacuated.

Two days after the earthquake, she was taken from her hotel to the embassy. The following evening, she was evacuated to Santo Domingo.

If Annie's experience was anything like that of other evacuees, the level of support for those arriving in Santo Domingo was simply outstanding. The deputy chief of mission greeted everyone getting off the plane. Everyone received a bottle of water and a granola bar, and sandwiches were available. A general services officer walked Annie to the bus that took her and others to a hotel where

reservations had been made. She began her journey home early the following morning.

We are so thankful for Annie's safe return, but it is impossible to rejoice wholeheartedly knowing that pain and suffering continue for so many others. We very much appreciate the FSN Emergency Relief Fund, which gives all of us at least some small way to help assist our dear local colleagues in Haiti.

**Martha Netherton**

*Office of Employee Relations*

**Bill Wanlund**

*Retired Foreign Service officer*

## Johnny Berg Remembered

I would like to express my deepest condolences to the family of Johnny Berg, who was noted for his personality and problem-solving skills.

On Dec. 2, 1979, the American Embassy in Tripoli was stormed by Libyan militants. I was among those who narrowly escaped being taken hostage. We were evacuated the following day, and as our plane touched down at Charles de Gaulle Airport, we were met by Johnny and First Secretary Guy Davis. They welcomed us warmly, fending off reporters and ushering us into a waiting limousine. Johnny arranged our

hotel accommodations and then met with us daily for the next three days until he had secured passage for our return to the United States. A friendly and comforting presence, he certainly eased the trauma of our escape from Tripoli.

**Anne-Marie Gabor**

*Retired Foreign Service specialist*

Let me offer a personal footnote to your obituary of Johnny Berg (*State Magazine*, January 2010). As an "old African hand," I had heard for years how Johnny helped children of FSOs stationed in Africa who got stranded in Paris trying to make holiday airplane connections. In 1986, when I was DCM in Niamey, a friend at the embassy in Paris introduced me to Johnny and that same Christmas he had occasion to help our children, abandoned in Paris by PanAm whose flight landed six hours late. He got them on new flights via Dakar and even went out to Charles de Gaulle Airport at midnight to make sure they made the plane without problems. We, as many others like us, will always be grateful to Johnny and honor his memory.

**Albert and Parvin Fairchild**

## Talk to Us

Letters should not exceed 250 words and should include the writer's name, address and daytime phone number. All letters become the property of *State Magazine*. Letters will be edited for length, accuracy and clarity. Only signed letters will be considered.

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# News



A new, consolidated work area has fraud prevention unit staff members smiling.

## Former Storeroom Houses FPU in Kingston

The fraud prevention unit of the U.S. Embassy in Kingston, Jamaica, has gained new offices, quarters that six months earlier had been a storeroom for chainsaws and other hurricane-preparedness supplies. The new area gave the FPU sufficient room for its files and the privacy to carry out investigations.

The unit needed new space to unite a split staff and respond to the high visa caseload. In the second half of fiscal 2009, 406 nonimmigrant visa cases, 57 new immigrant visa

cases, 21 American Citizen Services cases and 150 external requests were referred to the FPU. It also processed an additional 391 walk-in cases and entered 2,427 consular lookouts based on tips and information from other agencies.

Of the visa cases referred, the unit confirmed fraud in 42 percent of the immigrant visa cases and 27 percent of the nonimmigrant visa cases. The FPU was also engaged in outreach and training for mission customers, local governments and the Jamaican public.

# Department Giving Approaches CFC Goal

The State Department's 2009 Combined Federal Campaign fund drive was only a few thousand dollars short of its \$2.2 million goal by mid-January, and contributions were still flowing in, particularly from overseas.

Judy Ikels, chief of the Work Life Division in the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Employee Relations, said that although the official campaign ended Jan. 15, the Department would be accepting donations until Feb. 15. Her division

coordinates the Department's campaign under the leadership of Shelly Kornegay; the CFC of the National Capital Area had already met its 2009 goal of raising a record \$64 million.

More than 2,000 Department employees donated in the 2009 drive. The 24 who donated in the Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science gave \$23,979, or roughly \$1,000 per donor.

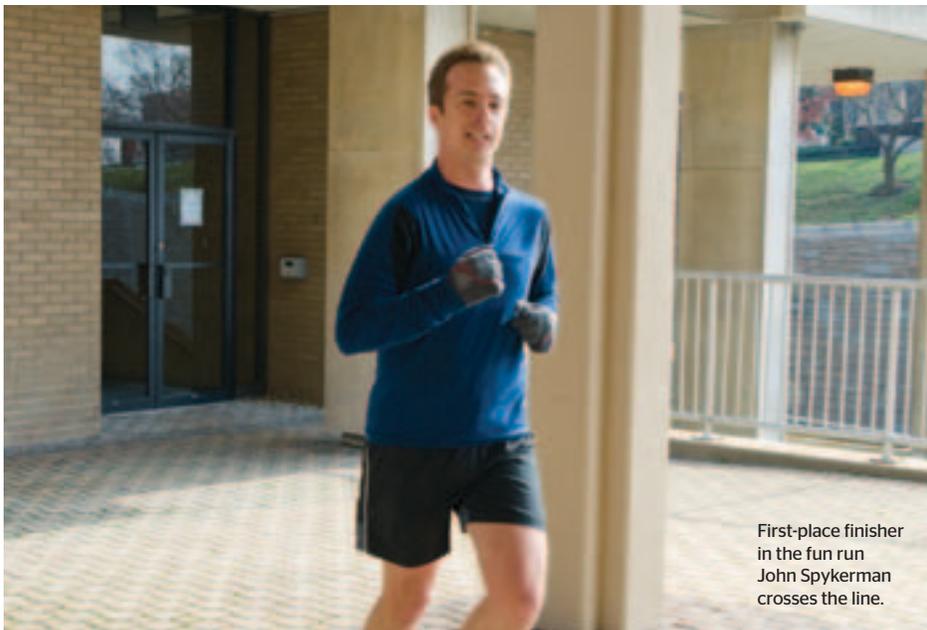
The bureaus giving the greatest sums

were among the Department's largest. They were, in order, Human Resources (\$90,727), European and Eurasian Affairs (\$88,645) and Diplomatic Security (\$87,967) in the still incomplete accounting.

"We appreciate all employee contributions and the hard work of bureau volunteers who coordinated the drive in addition to their normal duties," Ikels said. "Final figures will be announced at a spring CFC awards ceremony."

During the Department's campaign, the bureaus held fundraisers for the CFC's general fund. For instance, in early January the bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs held the first "State's Got Talent" show in the Dean Acheson Auditorium. The first-place winner among the 12 competing acts was Lisa Davis, who sang her rendition of "At Last." Second place went to Dan Shen, who played a classical piano medley, and third place to Opal Blackmon, who sang "Just a Prayer Away." The judges—Director General Nancy Powell and Jacqueline D. Hill, director of Civil Service Human Resource Management—were joined on the panel by a local recording artist.

Late last year, the Office of Employee Relations held a combination hot dog/bake sale/silent auction and a noncompetitive fun run/walk-a-thon, events that together raised \$1,833. John Spykerman finished first in the run, covering the three-mile course in 21.3 minutes, and DeeDee Smith, the first woman finisher, ran the course in under 26 minutes.



First-place finisher in the fun run John Spykerman crosses the line.

## INQUIRIES TO HR SERVICE CENTER TRIPLE

In the final two months of 2009, the level of inquiries to the Department's HR Service Center in Charleston, S.C., was three times that of the prior 10 months. The service center, which handles Human Resources-related inquiries from current and former employees, received 5,570 inquiries by the end of 2009, its first full year in operation.

The service center has 11 contract employees and two full-time Department staff. It has been designated as the first point of contact for routine HR-related questions. It now handles all inquiries regarding annuitant services, for instance.

Customer service representatives at the center use a database of common questions to provide answers and, if they cannot provide an answer, refer the caller to a subject matter expert. Employees can also pose questions on the AskHR Web site, [www.askhr.hr.state.gov](http://www.askhr.hr.state.gov), and the service center provides the answers and adds them to its database.

Jeff Lee, deputy director of the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Shared Services, said the service center aims to give

HR staff the ability to focus on work other than continually answering routine employee questions. He added that the center has increased employee satisfaction levels. Prior to the center's launch, he said, customer satisfaction with HR services was only 57 percent. Since the second quarter of 2009, the satisfaction level has risen to 74 percent. It stood at 78 percent in the first quarter of fiscal 2010.

The HR Service Center was launched in November 2008 (*State Magazine*, January 2009) when it began handling calls from Bureau of Diplomatic Security employees. The service center now also supports employees from the bureaus of Consular Affairs, Overseas Buildings Operations, Educational and Cultural Affairs, International Information Programs, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and Economic, Energy and Business Affairs. It can be reached at (866) 300-7419 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern time or by e-mail at [hrsc@state.gov](mailto:hrsc@state.gov). All questions are tracked until the employee receives an answer, Lee said.



Vice Consul Pablo Quintanilla, far left wearing sling, dances with Chinese university students.

## Embassy Beijing Celebrates Latino History Month

In September, five Venezuelan musicians played music of their homeland at the first celebration of Latino History Month at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. Caterers served quesadillas and other traditional Hispanic foods.

The concert drew students from at least four Chinese provinces and provided an outreach opportunity for consular officers to share information about U.S. culture, history and diversity, and to explain the visa process for U.S. study. When it began to rain, a portion of the concert was moved into Consul General Linda Donahue's apartment, which filled up with 70 U.S. staff and Chinese students. The staff taught students a chant made famous by U.S. Hispanic leader Cesar Chavez: "Si se puede, si se puede," yes we can, yes we can.

Other post activities for Latino History Month included a presentation on the history of salsa dancing, with a lesson from a professional salsa dancer and teacher, and the screening for students of the film *Real Women Have Curves*, which led to a discussion of immigration, family values and education.

# STATE

MAGAZINE

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## Submissions

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## Deadlines

The submission deadline for the May 2010 issue is March 15. The deadline for the June issue is April 15.

## Environmental Notes

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# Briefing Diversity to Bureaus

The mission of the Office of Civil Rights is to propagate fairness, equity and inclusion throughout the Department. The office has worked to expand its focus from simple Equal Employment Opportunity compliance to productive engagement with the bureaus as partners in our mission. Our Diversity Management and Outreach section not only prepares reports on workforce statistics, but works with the bureaus to address diversity-related issues proactively.

Bureau Briefings have been disseminated to assistant secretaries and directors from all 26 bureaus and feature a breakdown of their particular workforces with regard to race, national origin, gender and disability status, compared to the civilian labor force, the mean for the Department of State (Civil and Foreign Service) and in comparison to other Cabinet-level agencies.

The overall statistics for the State Department are shown in figure 1 below. Some things to remember when analyzing the numbers:

- All of the data is self-reported. If an individual with a disability, for instance, does not report the disability on the SF-256 form, it is not reflected in OCR's statistics.
- The Department also does not record data on religious preference, sexual orientation and many other areas that might be of interest, such as national origin.

Despite the limitations, including some recording inaccuracies, the numbers are an important way to begin the dialogue with bureaus on diversity issues. We chose a few key bureaus based on size, anomalies or their request for comprehensive discussions of their Bureau Briefings. Nine have been completed for this year.

Effective diversity management depends on the attention and dedication of senior leaders. The Department officials involved as Leadership Liaisons to our employee affinity groups have been effective in providing that attention and dedication. Here are a few other senior leaders who have made a real difference for the Department:

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy led the charge for getting same-sex partner benefits for Foreign Service officers. Ambassador Nancy McEldowney from the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs has not only met with leaders from various employee affinity groups to discuss diversity but also created and distributed an EUR-specific diversity statement. Susan Swart, the Department's chief information officer, provided

diversity training to all of her supervisors/managers, instituted a policy requiring diverse hiring panels for all positions grade 14 and above and piloted a diversity dialogue project.

The briefings provide an excellent opportunity to remind bureau leadership that:

**Equal Employment Opportunity is the law.**

- Apply Equal Employment Opportunity principles to hiring, training, promotion and retention efforts.
- Ensure that individuals with disabilities are accommodated in the workplace as well as at all public meetings, forums and trainings.

In the briefings, we also shared with bureau leadership the following strategies:

**Communicate to all staff that diversity is important.**

- Post the Secretary's Statement on Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity in all offices and installations.
- Compose and post a diversity statement for your bureau/division.
- Include diversity in the bureau's strategic planning .
- Encourage both informal and formal mentoring .
- Use focus groups to assess your workplace climate.

**Incorporate principles of diversity in recruitment.**

- Collaborate with your EX office and the Bureau of Human Resources regarding special hiring authorities such as Schedule A hiring authority ([www.opm.gov/disability](http://www.opm.gov/disability)), which noncompetitively appoints persons with disabilities, and the Veterans Rehabilitation Act for veterans.

- Consult the HR Office of Student Programs (<http://careers.state.gov/students/programs.html>) for internship/fellowship programs, which include diverse candidates (Priority Interns and Workforce Recruitment Program).

We hope, through an ongoing discussion of the importance of diversity, additional leaders will rise to the occasion to contribute to a fair, equitable and inclusive environment for all. ■



*John M. Robinson*  
John M. Robinson  
Office of Civil Rights

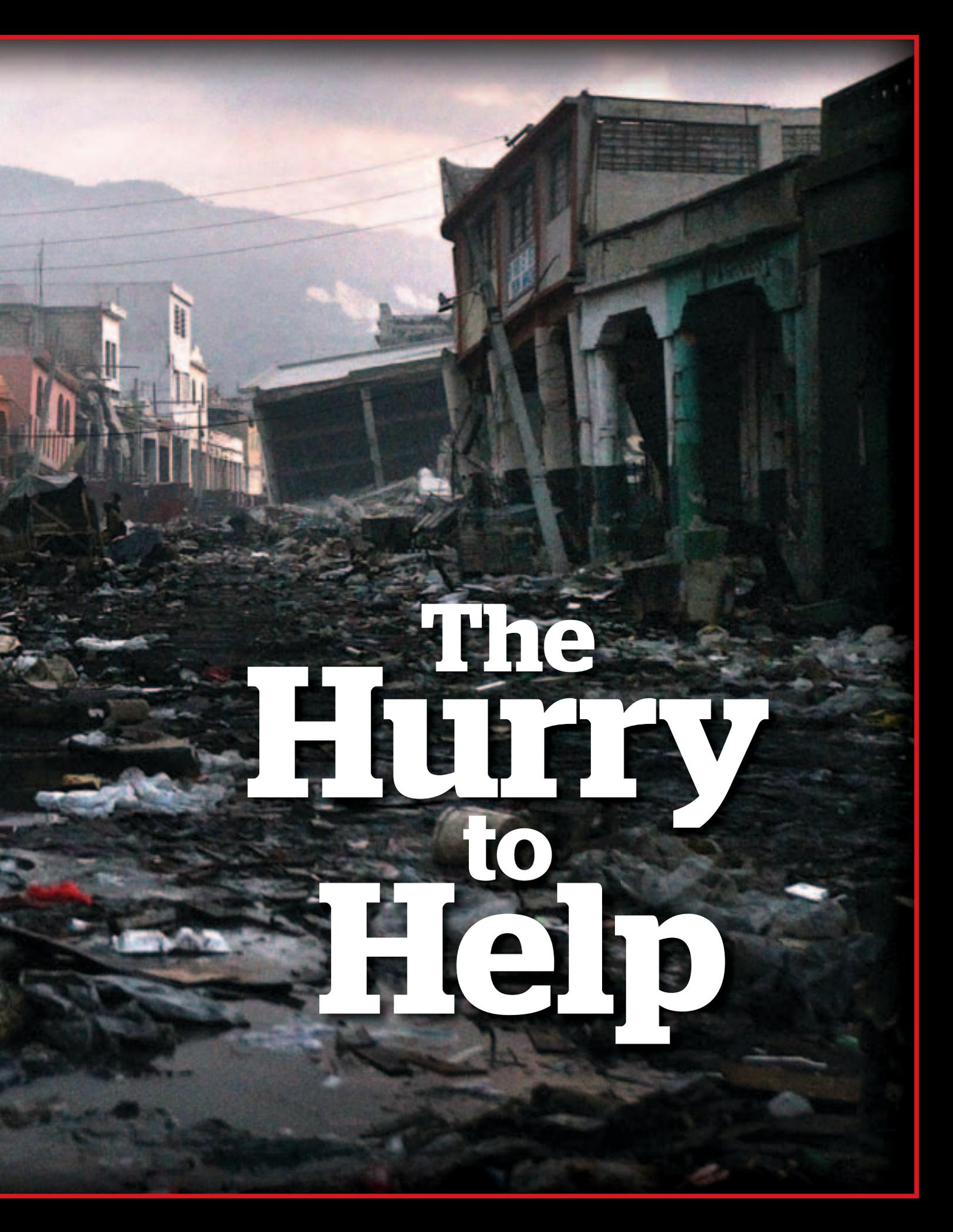
**Figure 1: FY 2008 Department of State Workforce Diversity (Percentage of Employees)**

	Women	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Civil Service	55.14	0.31	5.39	28.15	5.04	58.26
Foreign Service	34.66	0.35	5.73	6.80	5.24	81.82
Average of other						
Cabinet-level agencies	48.05	3.18	4.67	19.41	6.79	65.27
Civilian labor force	45.70	0.70	4.30	10.10	13.30	71.80

# SPECIAL REPORT /// EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI



A Haitian washes in stagnant water in an earthquake-destroyed neighborhood.



**The  
Hurry  
to  
Help**

# SPECIAL REPORT /// EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI

A child walks past a crack caused by the earthquake in a street in Port-au-Prince.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT) GETTY IMAGE; (OPPOSITE PAGE LEFT) JAMES J. JOHNSTON; (RIGHT) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

# Disaster Response

Department aids embassy employees in Haiti // By Ed Warner

The January 12 earthquake in Haiti killed at least five Locally Employed Staff members of Mission Haiti, six family members and one American employee, and left six staff members injured, three seriously. As of late January, 23 of the post's 956 LE Staff were still unaccounted for.

The earthquake, which occurred outside of the mission's business hours, left the embassy structure intact, although office cubicles were toppled (see related story). But as the extent of the disaster became better known, new challenges emerged for the Department, such as providing LE Staff with the funds and leave time to attend to injured family members, bury dead relatives and rebuild shattered homes. The Department's Office of Overseas Employment and Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs were examining such solutions as salary advances, converting leave time to cash and funeral grants to bury family members. OE Director Catherine Ebert-Gray said LE Staff may need a substantial amount of cash to rebuild their homes and lives following the devastation.

Providing medical care for the families of LE Staff was another big challenge. The embassy's health unit never stopped serving employees, and the Department of Health and Human Services in late January set up a facility on embassy grounds to care for LE Staff and their families, said Marjorie Phillips, deputy executive director of WHA's Executive Office. Tents had been set up for employees on the embassy compound, and Phillips said an additional 850 eight-person tents were coming.

Employees were fed at post, she added, both by the cafeteria and with Meals Ready to Eat. A shipment of rice, beans and cooking oil was ordered by the post with the assistance of the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo for distribution to the LE Staff.

## FSN Fund

In a key first step to getting LE Staff back on their feet financially, the Department immediately activated the FSN Emergency Relief Fund. By late January, it already authorized the embassy to provide \$100 to each LE Staff member. Director General Nancy

Powell encouraged giving to the fund, saying LE Staff and their families "are going to have enormous needs." Contributions can still be made by check, credit card or payroll deduction to help the LE Staff of all agencies at post (see related story). Additional information is at <http://rm.s.state.sbu/default.aspx>.

Donors responded generously, said fund manager Donna Bordley, but the fund needs to raise \$200,000 to cover the expected needs of LE Staff in Haiti.

Employee participation in the post's life and health insurance plans was voluntary, but Bureau of Human Resources data show most Mission Haiti LE Staff participated in both plans. Ebert-Gray said the Department is uncertain whether the underwriter will be able to cover all death benefits. If it cannot, the U.S. government may need to explore provisions to "step in to help and recoup the outlays from the company later," she said.

The mission met its first post-quake payroll, paying employees in cash. The next payroll was expected to return to using electronic funds transfer once local banks were back in operation.



U.S. citizens living in Haiti wait to be evacuated from the airport in Port-au-Prince several days after the earthquake. Left: The earthquake tumbled office equipment at the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince.

# SPECIAL REPORT/// EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI

## Leave Needed

OE said it would advise the mission on extending excused absences and other forms of leave to LE Staff. In Haiti, LE Staff—even those from differing agencies—may donate annual leave to other LE Staff if they and the recipient are paid under the same local compensation plan and receive their pay via the same Global Financial Services payroll office. However, leave is not transferrable between American employees and LE Staff, according to OE, because they are on separate pay plans.

Earthquakes hit U.S. embassies often enough that the Department has procedures in place arising from past experience. Yet no capital city has lately been hit by such a large quake as that which struck Haiti. The closest, in terms of casualties, was Managua in 1972—and that quake caused one-tenth the casualties expected from the Haitian disaster.

Ebert-Gray said determining how to help embassy employees in Haiti is a continuing process that will leave the Department better able to address disasters affecting colleagues in the future.

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*The author is deputy editor of State Magazine.*

## Embassy Rides Out Haiti Earthquake

/// By Jonathan Blyth

In the spring of 2008, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations completed construction of a new embassy compound for the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. As with all new diplomatic facilities, the bureau made certain the structure was earthquake-resistant.

To accomplish this, the bureau made sure its structural engineering design strictly adhered to the International Building Code and to the OBO supplement to that code. The supplement covers unique design requirements for each U.S. diplomatic post and details the building's design requirements, including those for withstanding gravity, snow, wind, earthquakes and even explosions.

When doing a site study, OBO's Office of Design and Engineering identifies the project's design criteria relating to such things as seismic forces and wind load. The study takes place at least a year prior to construction and leads the office to recommend what it believes will be the most effective structure.

The preferred earthquake-resistant system

is the one used at Embassy Port-au-Prince and includes reinforced concrete shear walls and mechanical, electrical, fire protection and other systems that can withstand the stresses of an earthquake. Embassy Port-au-Prince, in fact, was designed to meet the highest seismic design criteria and to withstand winds of 100 miles per hour.

Told the facility suffered only minor nonstructural damage from the earthquake, Rod Evans, OBO project director during the embassy's construction, said he wasn't surprised.

"I would have been amazed if it didn't survive," he said. "The ability of the embassy to withstand a 7.0-magnitude earthquake is testimony to OBO's building design criteria, the American contractor's construction expertise and the hard work of the many Haitian workers who contributed to building the facility."

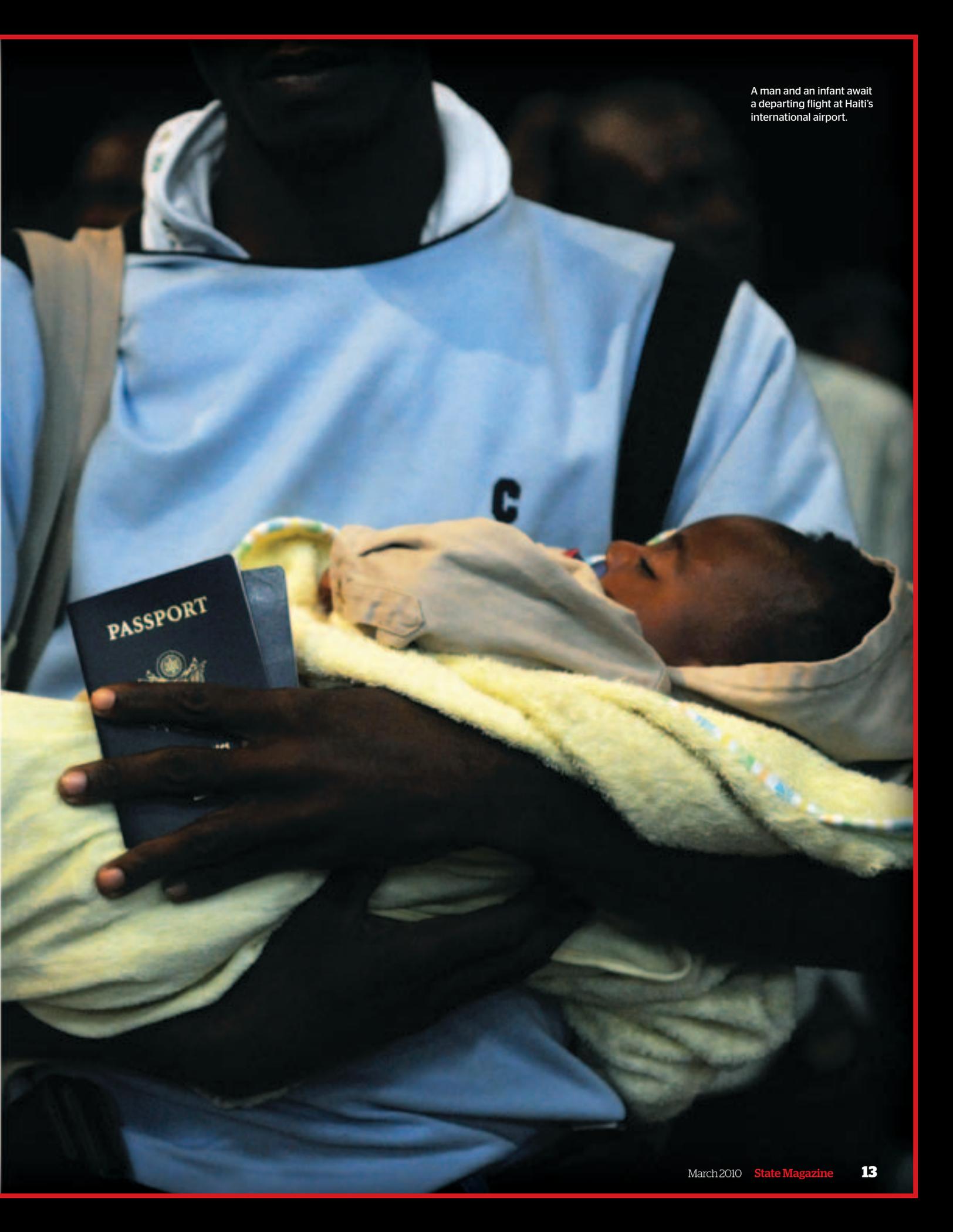
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*The author is director of external affairs at the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations.*



Claudia Cordeiro, regional training coordinator of the Miami Passport Agency, holds a child in Port-au-Prince. Right: A tent city was erected for remaining embassy employees inside the embassy compound.





A man and an infant await a departing flight at Haiti's international airport.

# SPECIAL REPORT /// EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI



Haitian men rest in Port-au-Prince after unloading a truck filled with food from USAID.

# Rapid Response

Consular Affairs task forces respond to quake // *By Wally Doerge*

On Jan. 12, at 4:53 p.m. local time, an earthquake of 7.0 magnitude struck Haiti, the worst in more than 200 years. About an hour later, the Department had launched round-the-clock task forces to monitor the crisis and respond to the needs of the U.S. citizens trapped in the destruction.

In the Operations Center, Task Force 2 oversaw all consular aspects of the disaster. To help handle the large volume of calls, Task Force 8 was rapidly set up in the Consular Affairs conference room. The magnitude of the crisis required help from consular officers outside of Washington, D.C., and Task Force 5 was set up in the call center in Michigan to answer overflow phone calls. The U.S. Mission in Mexico helped answer some of the thousands of e-mail inquiries.

When callers contacted the task force regarding U.S. citizens in Haiti, officers entered biographical information and the last known location of the person into the crisis management database. The U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince used the same database to add information about U.S. citizens' welfare as the information became available. The database was updated as people heard from their U.S. citizen family members and called the task force to say they were okay. Information about U.S. citizens who were believed to be trapped in collapsed buildings was passed on to search and rescue teams on the ground.

## Person Finder

During the early hours following the cataclysm, the task forces received many calls regarding people who were not U.S. citizens. To aid these foreign citizens, the State Department convened a meeting of nongovernmental organizations and technology companies. Together, these groups created the "person finder," an online service available in French, English and Creole, which helped locate people of all nationalities in the earthquake zone. The person finder is on the Department's quake-related Web page, <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ha/earthquake/index.htm>.

Meanwhile on the ground in Haiti, consular officers were assisted by personnel from throughout the embassy, along with additional staff deployed to Port-au-Prince

to ensure that U.S. citizens received necessary medical care and were evacuated on all available flights. Thousands of Americans departed Haiti on flights to the United States and to the Dominican Republic. Consular officers posted in the Dominican Republic worked tirelessly to ensure that injured Americans received medical care and assisted U.S. citizens in making onward travel plans to the United States.

## SOUTHCOM Arrives

The U.S. Southern Command arrived on the scene almost immediately to set up air traffic control at Toussaint L'Ouverture International Airport. Though the airport control tower had no power, there was a desperate need to coordinate relief flights arriving with critical supplies of food, water and medical supplies. Many flights originated from the U.S. military, nongovernmental organizations and companies. Among these were aircraft of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division, two HC-130 Hercules fixed-wing aircraft from Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point in Hawaii and flights from the American and International Red Cross, United Nations Children's Fund and Federal Express.

When a relief flight landed, it unloaded cargo and departed as soon as possible so another flight would be able to land. SOUTHCOM kept track of arrival times, number of seats available after supplies were unloaded and departure times.

The Bureau of Consular Affairs worked with SOUTHCOM to arrange for American citizens to leave Haiti. They were counted and placed in groups according to the number of seats on the next available flight. They had no choice where they were headed; they were to

go where there were supplies and adequate medical care. Some went to Homestead Air Reserve Base near Miami and others to Orlando Sanford International Airport. Still others flew to El Salvador, where they were assisted by consular officers to board flights to the United States.

By the time the task forces wind down, consular officers will have assisted thousands of American citizens to return safely home to the United States.

With the Haiti earthquake task forces, the Bureau of Consular Affairs entered new territory in handling crises abroad. Services normally provided by the host government are being administered by the U.S. government and its international partners because of the devastation. The bureau also provided critical assistance to the most vulnerable population caught in the destruction, the children of Haiti, by expediting visas for orphans whose applications were in the pipeline at the time of the earthquake.

Consular Affairs continues to expand and strengthen its capabilities and resources so that it can deliver more and varied assistance in the future.

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*The author is a specialist in the Office of Policy Coordination and Public Affairs of the Bureau of Consular Affairs.*



Members of one of the Department's Haiti task forces track data on their computerscreens.

# SPECIAL REPORT /// EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI



An earthquake survivor prays at a ceremony in remembrance of those who died in Haiti.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT) GETTY IMAGES; (OPPOSITE PAGE) U.S. EMBASSY IN PORT LOUIS

# Providing Support

## How to support the FSN Emergency Relief Fund // By Ed Warner

The FSN Emergency Relief Fund needs donations to help Locally Employed Staff in Haiti get back on their feet financially. Anyone, including those from outside the Department of State, may contribute to the fund by sending a check to Gift Fund Coordinator Donna Bordley, Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, RM/CFO, Rm. 7427, Washington, DC 20520. Checks should be made payable to the U.S. Department of State, designated for the FSN Emergency Relief Fund and include a return address, for a letter of acknowledgment.

American employees can give to the fund by using their Visa or MasterCard credit cards. They can send an e-mail to "FSN Emergency Relief Fund" on the Global Address Listing and include their name, mailing address, VISA/MasterCard account number and its expiration date. They also must include the following statement: "Contribution to the FSN Emergency Relief Fund. I authorize the Department of State to charge the referenced credit card account in the amount of U.S. \$XX as a contribution to the FSN Emergency Relief Fund." Donors receive an e-mail back that can be used for tax purposes.

Americans and Locally Employed Staff may also contribute via payroll deduction. American employees can request a one-time or recurring deduction from net pay by e-mailing the Payroll Customer Support Center at PayHelp@state.gov (in the GAL under "Payroll Customer Support"), calling (800) 521-2553 or (877) 865-0760 or faxing a signed request to (843) 308-5625. Requests should include the employee's name, address, Social Security number, date of birth and this statement: "I intend to make a gift in the amount of \$XX as a contribution to the FSN Emergency Relief Fund. I request the Depart-

ment of State to deduct from each of my biweekly salary payments \$XX for XX pay periods, until the total gift amount has been deducted." Employees making one-time deductions should say so in the request.

LE Staff may make payroll deductions, too, if they are paid by Global Financial Services offices in Charleston, S.C., or Bangkok. They can simply send an e-mail (subject line: "LES Pay Deduction Request for FSN Emergency Relief Fund") to PayHelp@state.gov and include their name, address, LES number and this statement: "I intend to make a gift in the amount of XX (local currency amount) as a contribution to the FSN Emergency Relief Fund. I request the Department of State to deduct from each of my biweekly salary payments XX (local currency amount) for XX number of pay periods, until the total gift amount has been deducted." One-time deductions should be so indicated.

A suggestion was placed on The Sounding Board that U.S. embassies worldwide hold fundraisers where staff could contribute. The Sounding Board staff also held a fundraiser, saying it had been inspired by fundraising being done by U.S. embassies in Pristina, Brasilia, Kathmandu and Mexico City; the 148th and 149th A-100 classes; and the New Orleans Passport Office. Its happy-hour event in January had a \$20 cover charge, half which went to the fund and half to cover expenses.

Those at post who wish to donate in cash may take U.S. dollars or local currency in cash or check (payable to the "U.S. Department of State") to their post's cashier, who will prepare a receipt.

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*The author is deputy editor of State Magazine.*

## Mauritians remember one of their own // By Priya Beegun and Craig White

The Locally Employed Staff and other members of the U.S. Embassy in Port Louis organized an ecumenical memorial mass to remember Foreign Service Officer Victoria DeLong, who died in Haiti's Jan. 12 earthquake, as well as the Mauritians and Haitians affected by the earthquake.

DeLong was also commemorated at a service in Whittier, Calif., where speakers included Director General Nancy Powell and Susan Johnson, head of the American Foreign Service Association. A Navy veteran, DeLong received a military honor guard.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said DeLong, cultural affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, "was a veteran Foreign Service Officer who worked tirelessly to build bridges of understanding and respect between the people of the United States and the people of Haiti. She served her country with distinction and honor, and she will be sorely missed."

In Mauritius, the Jan. 22 mass at St. Louis Cathedral, the biggest and oldest church in Port Louis, was presided over by Monsignor Maurice Piat, bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Port Louis. Invited were members of the Mauritius Council of Religions, family members of Mauritians affected by the earthquake, singers and others touched by the tragedy. The family of DeLong, who was a public affairs officer in Port Louis from 2005 to 2008, sent a statement that was read at the memorial service by a member of the public affairs section staff.

The mass was also attended by members of the media, diplomatic community and the public and high officials of the Republic of Mauritius, including President Sir Anerood Jugnauth.

The service was celebrated in English, French and Creole, and included testimonials from Chargé d'Affaires Barrie Walkley and Deputy Chief of Mission Virginia Blaser, as well as testimonials, scripture readings and prayers offered by LE Staff.

"Victoria knew that we are all one people; she spent her career focusing on that unity... finding ways to bring not just governments closer together, but even more importantly to bring people closer together," Blaser said.

The service included Hindu and Baha'i prayers, and a statement from the United Nations resident coordinator in Mauritius, referring to the U.N.'s losses in Haiti.

In the wake of the earthquake, the post's LE Staff has contributed generously to the FSN Relief Fund, and the government of Mauritius contributed \$500,000 to the U.N. for Haiti relief. ■



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*Priya Beegun is cultural affairs officer and Craig White is public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Port St. Louis.*



# Olympic Hurdles

CG Vancouver planned well for Winter Games

/// By Rosemary Eng

In his downtown Vancouver office, Consul General Phillip Chicola has a sweeping view of the magnificent Coast Mountain range, stunning scenery that is one reason Vancouver, Canada, was selected to host the 2010 Winter Olympics, which ended in February.

Vancouver's location made the Games exciting and challenging for the consulate general and the many other U.S. agencies involved in planning and preparation for the Games.

"It was a unique moment for Canada and the United States," Chicola said. "The games were so close to the United States, yet took place in a foreign country."

## Vast Attendance

Because Vancouver is just 100 miles north of Seattle and about 35 miles from the U.S. border, the Games drew attendees from among the approximately four million Americans living in the Interstate 5 corridor. In all, an estimated half-million visitors crossed the British Columbia-Washington state border or passed through Customs and Border Protection pre-clearance at Vancouver International Airport.

The Games also drew 5,500 athletes and team officials, including 220 U.S. athletes and a U.S. delegation of 650. Overall, there were roughly 1.6 million ticket holders, 35,000 overnight visitors per day and 10,000 media attendees, not to mention the three billion worldwide television viewers.

As if the Olympics were not enough, they were followed by the Paralympic Games, under way this month. The Paralympics were expected to draw 1,350 athletes and team officials from more than 40 participating countries, including about 60 athletes and a delegation of 120 from the United States.

The consulate general began its planning in August 2008, when Bureau of Diplomatic Security Agents Jonathan Kahele and Steve Roxbury arrived to begin coordinating U.S.-Canada joint security efforts for U.S. interests.

Vancouver's location made this an especially challenging and complex effort, Kahele said. Because the United States and Canada are allies, numerous security and

emergency management entities have their own established cross-border relationships on many levels. A comprehensive Olympics security coordination plan required uniting all of those parties into a "whole of government" approach that preserved the integrity of U.S. international objectives and requirements, he said.

All aspects of security for such events changed dramatically after Sept. 11, 2001, said Kahele, who has worked Olympics security in Beijing, Athens and Salt Lake City. Most of the more than 200 employees assigned on temporary duty to the 2010 Games were in security-related assignments. These representatives, drawn from various federal law enforcement and military organizations, provided security support and liaison for American athletes, coaches, corporate sponsors and official VIP delegations.

## Coordination Office

Meanwhile, the consulate general's 2010 Olympics Coordination Office, headed by Frank Manganiello, management officer from the U.S. Mission in Brazil, was seeking to secure some 300 hotel rooms for VIP delegations and temporary staff. However, the Vancouver Olympic Committee had already snapped up 80 percent of the hotel rooms, and even without the Olympics, Vancouver is a popular tourist destination.

Most American temporary-duty staff worked out of the Olympics Coordination Office, but a small group of public affairs and American Citizen Services staff were posted to the mountain resort community of Whistler, where alpine events were held.

More Americans were expected to attend the Winter Games than ever before, including some of the estimated 90,000 Americans

The region's serene beauty is on display in this wide-angle view toward Howe Sound from the offices of the U.S. Consulate General in Vancouver.



living in the Vancouver consular district of British Columbia and Yukon Territory. Nonemergency ACS and visa services were significantly reduced to boost services for Americans attending the Olympics, said ACS Chief Carol Cox.

The ACS section prepared for an expected surge in emergency passport assistance for Americans whose passports were lost or stolen, she said. The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, which went into effect in 2009, applies to the U.S.-Canada border, requiring specific secure documents such as passports, enhanced driver's licenses and Trusted Traveler identifications for border crossing.

When the Games ended, the hard work had just begun for Customs and Border Protection, which conducts customs and immigration pre-clearance at Vancouver International Airport. Pre-clearance operations ran for 72 hours straight after the closing ceremonies, said Richard Roberts, CBP port director for Vancouver and Victoria. CBP also operated a satellite facility in a remote terminal at the airport for personnel with Olympic accreditation, such as athletes, coaches and the media.

"It was like nothing the airport had ever handled before," he said.



Ambassador David Jacobson, left, and Consul General Phillip Chicola conduct a pre-Olympics inspection of the Whistler Creekside alpine skiing venue.

## American Stories

The post's public affairs staffers worked long hours meeting the need for information for the estimated 10,000 media representatives who were in Vancouver for the Olympics. Though the Games were a thoroughly Canadian show, the proximity to the United States meant that there were many stories with a uniquely American aspect that were begging to be told.

"We wanted to promote the many positive aspects of our relationship with Canada without detracting from Vancouver's showcase status during the Games," said Vancouver Public Affairs Officer Charles Smith.

With the close of the Paralympic Games March 21, life will return to normal for the consulate's 60-some employees. Major roads will reopen to the public, and the city will again belong to its residents.

Everyone at this post is looking forward to spring. ■

The author is press and cultural affairs assistant at the U.S. Consulate General in Vancouver.

*The author is press and cultural affairs assistant at the U.S. Consulate General in Vancouver.*



# New Horizons

Department's tutors offer students new opportunities // By Ed Warner

Test scores are rising in the Washington, D.C., public school system, and some of the credit goes to the State Department volunteers who have over the past 12 years mentored and tutored weekly at Miner Elementary School. The one-on-one tutoring sessions, held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 3 p.m., help second and third graders with reading and comprehension, using a curriculum prepared by teachers.

Miner Principal LaVonne Taliaferro-Bunch decides each year which grade levels most need individual specialized attention. Then, Donna M. Butler, the State Department's mentor coordinator, and Donita Holt, the school's Parent Resource Center outreach specialist, organize the program and partner tutors with students. Their aim is to assist children who are at the upper edge of their performance levels in breaking through to higher levels.

The program is one reason the school's third-grade benchmark grades are the highest in her six years at the school, Taliaferro-Bunch said. D.C. schools' 2009 data show all D.C. elementary students increased their reading and math proficiency on average in 2009. At Miner, reading proficiency rose from 29 percent in 2007, meaning about a third of students were proficient, to 35 percent last year.

"Our test scores have jumped significantly," said Holt, adding that the program also "brings a lot of hope for the children" by exposing them to wider opportunities, such as those offered by the Department.

## Diplomatic Encounter

In one such opportunity, tutor Jordan Hird arranged for 10 students to visit historic Blair House near the White House for The Taste of India Cultural Experience with U.S. and

Indian diplomats. Those involved, including the Department's Office of the Chief of Protocol, were so pleased with the students' participation that they allowed two additional students to later be invited to Andrews Air Force Base for the arrival of the wife of India's prime minister.

At the school, the tutors focus on improving students' reading skills, something many of the tutors have done in the past. Lynette Evans, for instance, was a "buddy reader" while in high school, and Tim Carpenter participated in a similar program while in college. Evans said she especially enjoys seeing the children she tutors making progress.

Butler said partnerships have developed between the Department and the school's students, faculty, teachers, parents and guardians. The willingness and collaboration of these "creative and skilled professionals to share their knowledge, skills, talents, gifts and

Naomi Feigenbaum works with her student.





Suzanne Rathlev tutors her student. **Below:** Like their students, the tutors ride a bus to the school—but the tutors get to check their BlackBerrys.



creativity with future generations will help build a better tomorrow,” she said.

The school provides special reading and comprehension workbooks and assignments that the tutors and students work on throughout the semester. On occasion, tutors also present story books, novels and activities for the students to reward them for work well done.

Butler works with the principal and the school’s faculty to plan orientation and training sessions at the beginning of each school year for new recruits and veteran tutors. With help from tutors and Department bureaus, they also arrange for the students to visit the Harry S Truman Building for special programs and activities several times a year. They also arrange a winter holiday celebration and an awards ceremony in the spring.

“We want to help young people understand the connection between success in school, success on the job and in their future careers,” Butler said. “The program’s goal is to make learning fun and to assist in taking the kids to greater heights.”

### Connections Made

Beyond learning, the students also appreciate developing one-to-one connections with tutors, said tutor Naomi Feigenbaum. Those relationships grow because the tutors go the extra mile in many cases. For instance, Feigenbaum recently brought her student a world flags quiz and word game, aiming to lend variety to her tutoring. Tutor Nancy Talbot said she so much enjoys the program that she looks forward to chaperoning her students at special job-shadowing opportunities.

The tutors, too, receive benefits. Carpenter, who lives in the Miner neighborhood, said he wanted a chance to connect with his community. Talbot said the trip to the school recharges her with fresh ideas when returning to work.

Butler said this all reflects how the program benefits the Department itself. Through the program, tutors gain experience with “strategic team initiatives, being part of a unified diverse effort and working together to build, grow and develop concepts, not to mention improve work force productivity and increase the quality of their work environments.”

There are 76 Department volunteers in the tutoring program, and Butler said she hopes more tutors will join, so that the remaining 59 students in those grade levels can benefit.

Prospective tutors will find that Miner Elementary students are generally polite. The school itself is in a relatively new building, replete with tall ceilings, an indoor pond full of decorative fish and an outdoor environmental laboratory created by the school’s staff and children. ■

*The author is deputy editor of State Magazine.*



# Resting Place

Kuwait volunteers seek Iraqi soldiers' remains  
*/// By Nicole Nuccelli*

Since March 2009, the staff of the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait has helped the International Committee of the Red Cross and Kuwaiti and Iraqi governments search for the remains of missing Iraqi troops killed in Kuwait during the 1990–91 Gulf War. While the bulk of the international focus on those missing in the war has been on the approximately 370 Kuwaitis still missing, efforts in recent years have slowed due to an absence of information and a decline in the pursuit of leads.

The search for missing Iraqis aims to re-energize the search process by demonstrating that it is possible—even 19 years later—to locate the remains of the missing.

The regime of Saddam Hussein blocked the multilateral cooperation needed to recover mortal remains in Iraq and Kuwait, and security conditions and a lack of leads hindered the search after the 2003 liberation of Iraq. However, in March 2009, U.S. Embassy volunteers from several U.S. agencies initiated surveys to help interpret data and grid coordinates from burial reports that arose during the Gulf War. They also advised on recovery techniques and locations to excavate, and provided forensic experts.

## Several Representatives

The multinational team of volunteers worked under the umbrella of the ICRC's Tripartite Commission and included representatives from the U.S., British and Iraqi embas-

sies in Kuwait, ICRC and Kuwait's government and its National Committee for Missing and Prisoner of War Affairs.

The team's work paid off in November, when it recovered what are believed to be the bones, clothes and prayer beads of several Iraqi soldiers who had remained buried for nearly two decades.

The U.S. Embassy in Kuwait credited Political Officer Tom Rosenberger, the U.S. delegate to the Tripartite Committee's working group, for launching the initiative and recruiting embassy interagency cartographic and forensics experts, who contributed to the successful exhumations in November.

"We hope the remains we discovered will be identified and subsequently returned to the families still mourning the loss of their loved ones," said Rosenberger, who is also a member of the "dig team" seeking remains. "This humanitarian effort has spawned new working-level government-to-government cooperation between the two former adversaries."

The government of Kuwait's vigorous support for these excavations has been reciprocated fully by the government of Iraq, which has intensified its search for still-missing Kuwaitis. This welcome development includes efforts to verify Iraqi eyewitness accounts of executions and burials, as well as the recent excavation of possible gravesites in Karbala and Ramadi. The initiative earned the Iraqi



**Above:** Political Officer Tom Rosenberger, left, searches for remains. **Below:** Captain Chris Loftis, center in tan cap, of the Office of Military Cooperation-Kuwait consults with the Kuwaiti Forensics Team.



government a commendation from the ICRC and Kuwaiti delegation to the Tripartite Committee at a November 2009 meeting of the committee.

## Healing Wounds

U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait Deborah K. Jones attended that meeting, which discussed the latest positive developments in the ongoing excavation, and suggested that the early-November discoveries could foster cooperation in additional sectors between the two former adversaries.

“We commend the Kuwaitis and Iraqis for their efforts to heal the wounds of the past by collaborating on this daunting but highly commendable project,” she said. “Families from both countries will be able to find the closure they have

been seeking for nearly 20 years, and the success of this project can only spur increased future efforts on both sides.”

The emerging spirit of cooperation may ultimately help close a difficult and painful chapter in Kuwait-Iraq history and become a model for the collaboration and cooperation on which a brighter future for both countries and peoples can be built.

“We hope this project will encourage the resolution of other outstanding issues between Kuwait and Iraq, fostering an improved relationship between the two countries and stability and prosperity in the region,” Ambassador Jones said. ■

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*The author is an information officer at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait City.*



PHOTOGRAPH: CORBIS

Lake Assal, the lowest point on the African continent, is surrounded by glittering white deposits of salt and gypsum.

# *Djibouti*

Strategic hub in the Horn of Africa is key U.S. partner

*/// By Niles Cole*



## Once a sleepy little post,

the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti City is now a hub for U.S. security and humanitarian efforts in the Horn of Africa and a growing center for port, financial and conference services. While most staff find the post busy

and professionally rewarding, they find time to enjoy nearby beaches, world-class snorkeling and diving, and volcanic landscapes in the countryside. The people are friendly, relaxed and welcoming to Americans.

A small, lightly populated desert nation, the Republic of Djibouti has emerged as a pocket of stability and strategic partner for the United States in the turbulent Horn of Africa. It hosts the only U.S. military base in sub-Saharan Africa and is a platform for naval refueling and resupply, regional strategic communications and humanitarian operations.

A tolerant country with a 99 percent Muslim majority, Djibouti sees its development as linked to greater engagement with the outside world. To this end, it is building a future as a regional service hub, with a new \$400 million deepwater container terminal and new hotel and conference facilities all completed within the past four years.

The embassy has likewise grown in the past decade, from about 10 American staff to nearly 40 today, and projects further expansion with the move to a \$120 million new embassy compound in 2011. Embassy Djibouti is increasingly a family post, especially for those with young children. While still an isolated hardship environment, Djibouti offers attractive beaches, water sports and hiking.

## People and History

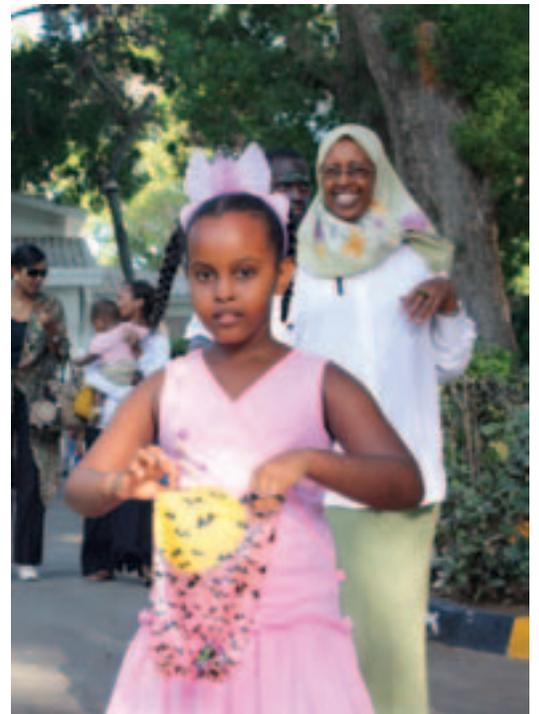
Djibouti is situated at the strategic Bab-el-Mandeb (Strait of Tears) at the confluence of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, through which pass more than 20,000 ships a year—mostly carrying goods between Europe and Asia through the Suez Canal. Sitting astride important historic trading routes, Djibouti has long embraced a mix of cultures and influences from Africa, the Middle East and Europe. The people are traditionally nomadic pastoralists, drawn principally from the Somali and Afar ethnic groups, along with a small Arab community.

French interest in the area began in the 1840s and expanded after the 1869 opening of the Suez Canal. Djibouti City was later established as the capital, and the port terminus of a train line to Addis Ababa in neighboring Ethiopia was completed in 1917. This port continues to serve as the lifeline for Ethiopia and the principal economic engine for Djibouti.

The United States established a consulate in April 1977 and upgraded to a full embassy after Djibouti gained independence from France the same year. The French still retain their largest military base outside France in Djibouti and remain a visible presence in the country.



**From top:** A man and his camel take a break from harvesting salt at Lac Assal; Political/Economic Officer Rebecca Hunter holds “Flat Stanley” after arriving at the port town of Obock on a CH-53 helicopter; Mothers take their children trick-or-treating in the embassy compound during a Halloween party.





Self-Help Assistant Deka Hassan shows one of the craft items available for purchase at Lac Abbé. Above: Embassy staff and visitors head out on a trip to see whale sharks. Djibouti's container port is in the background.

## A Key Partner

Djibouti serves as a key partner for the United States in the Horn of Africa. Djibouti's

world-class port facilities hosted more than 400 foreign military ship visits in 2009, supporting multinational counterpiracy, counterterrorism and other activities. Camp Lemonnier, the U.S. military base, is home to more than 2,000 U.S. service members. It is the headquarters of the U.S. Africa Command's Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, which focuses on military-to-military cooperation, stabilization and conflict-prevention operations in 13 countries around the region. Embassy personnel enjoy dining, recreation, shopping and other entertainment at Camp Lemonnier at moderate cost.

In addition to serving as a military platform, Djibouti hosts a 600,000-watt Voice of America and Radio Sawa transmission facility for the Middle East and East Africa, broadcasting in Somali and Arabic. Djibouti is also home to the sole U.S. Agency for International Development warehouse for pre-positioned food relief outside the continental United States. Emergency food aid and disaster-relief supplies held at this 30,000-metric-ton warehouse can reach disaster-stricken populations in Africa and parts of Asia up to 75 percent faster than goods shipped from the United States.

Djibouti strongly supports multilateral efforts to promote regional security and integration. In 2008–2009, it hosted “the Djibouti Process,” United Nations-sponsored peace talks that led to the election of a new government in neighboring Somalia. Djibouti also hosts the headquarters for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, a regional body that focuses on cooperation and economic integration in the Horn of Africa. The latest member of the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance program, administered by the Bureau of African Affairs, Djibouti seeks to become more involved in multilateral peacekeeping and recently hosted the first-ever field training exercise of the African Union's East African Standby Brigade.

## Development and Democracy

The United States also actively supports the Djibouti government's efforts to foster the country's economic and social development. U.S. programs and activities focus on building capacity in Djibouti's health care and educational systems, promoting good governance and strengthening its security sector.

Djibouti devotes an impressive 40 percent of its national budget to health and education, and USAID has played a critical role in recent advances in these sectors. In health, since 2003, USAID refurbished or built 99 percent of all rural maternal and child health clinics and helped train their staff, resulting in a tripling of childhood immunization rates in rural areas and a significant reduction in infant mortality. Other health programs address tuberculosis, polio and malnutrition in children under five. In education, USAID's work with the Ministry of Education has also achieved significant results. Between 2003 and 2007, primary-school enrollment rates increased from 49 to 67 percent, and support to girls' education helped close a gender gap. Programs now focus on improving education quality.



**From top:** Whale sharks can grow as long as 18 meters. This one is about 11 meters long; Kyong Wong, spouse of the deputy chief of mission, rides a camel at Arta Beach; An Afar girl sings the Djibouti national anthem at the inauguration of the U.S.-funded Obock Pier project, the largest Foreign Military Financing project in sub-Saharan Africa.



The embassy is promoting further progress in democratic reforms as Djibouti prepares for presidential and regional elections in 2011. USAID is contributing to the democracy/governance agenda through transparency and public accountability programs and will soon unveil an elections program that will include public information campaigns, training for political parties and election workers and support for election observers. Further advocacy for

democratic reform is a top mission priority.

Djibouti City is a small seaside capital with vestiges of French colonial architecture, especially in the city center. Supermarkets, cafes and restaurants feature freshly caught seafood and French or Middle Eastern cuisine. Reflecting the country's social tolerance, bars, cafes and clubs are sprinkled throughout the downtown area. Yet, this is still a developing-world environment, with colorful markets, animated pedestrians and visible poverty. The cityscape is dominated by the blue waters of the Gulf of Tadjoura, which is visible from many points in the capital.

## Geological Wonders

Outside the city, Djibouti's lightly populated rural areas offer stunning landscapes. The country's distinctive "C" shape is due to three tectonic plates pulling apart to create the Great Rift Valley, where fossils of some of the earliest forms of man have been discovered. Lac Assal and Lac Abbé are two particular jewels. At 156 meters below sea level, Lac Assal is the saltiest body of water on Earth and the lowest point on the African continent. At Lac Abbé, where the original *Planet of the Apes* was filmed, volcanic hot-spring activity left calcium-bicarbonate chimneys up to 50 meters high as the water level receded.

To cool off during the hotter summer months, embassy staff head to the beaches that line the Gulf of Tadjoura. From the sugar-white sand at Sables Blancs to the deeper, cooler pebble beach at the Bay of Ghoubet, Djibouti offers excellent water sports including diving, snorkeling and kite surfing. Winter brings a unique migratory animal to the Gulf of Tadjoura—whale sharks. Swimming with these creatures is a special treat, as the sharks are herbivores and pose no danger to humans. These slow-moving, gentle giants—they average 11 meters long—sometimes play with snorkelers during embassy-organized boat excursions. The whale sharks arrive in the bay in late November and stay until the end of January. They are not to be missed. ■

*The author is the public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti.*

## At a Glance >>> Djibouti



**Capital:** Djibouti

**Government type:** republic

**Area:** 23,180 sq. km.

**Comparative area:** slightly smaller than Massachusetts

**Population:** 724,600

**Languages:** French and Arabic (both official), Somali and Afar

**Ethnic groups:** Somali, Afar, Ethiopian, Arab, French and Italian

**GDP - per capita:** \$2,800

**Natural resources:** salt, perlite and gold

**Agricultural products:** livestock, fishing, and fruits and vegetables

**Export partners:** Somalia, UAE and Yemen

**Import partners:** Saudi Arabia, India and China

**Currency (code):** Djiboutian francs (DJF)

**Internet country code:** .dj

Source: Country Background Notes



# INSTITUTE OF PEACE

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton emphasizes the U.S. commitment to stopping nuclear proliferation in a speech at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

## *Peaceful Vision*

Department works to strengthen nuclear nonproliferation treaty // *By James G. LaFemina*

In May, delegations from nearly 190 countries will gather at the United Nations to review the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The NPT Review Conference, or RevCon, has convened every five years since 1975.

The treaty, which is the cornerstone of international efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons, is the most widely accepted arms control agreement and a foundation of efforts to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

A Google search on the phrase “nuclear nonproliferation treaty” reflects the treaty’s importance—it returns nearly two million hits.

In a major foreign policy address to a crowd in Prague’s Hradcany Square in April 2009, President Barack Obama stressed “America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.” To achieve this vision, he pledged to work with others to strengthen the treaty as a basis for cooperation and reaffirmed the treaty’s defining provisions.

“The basic bargain is sound,” he said, “Countries with nuclear weapons will move toward disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them and all countries can access peaceful nuclear energy.”

Parties to the treaty believe May’s RevCon should take a balanced approach to the treaty’s three fundamental and mutually reinforcing pillars: disarmament, nonproliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Clearly, the United States has placed renewed emphasis on the treaty, the com-

mitment to multilateralism and the pursuit of disarmament.

### **Under Stress**

The RevCon comes at a time when the global nuclear nonproliferation regime is facing a number of stresses, including North Korea’s announced withdrawal from the treaty in 2003 and Iran’s continued noncompliance with its obligations under the treaty. In Prague, President Obama stressed the importance of compliance with the treaty’s nonproliferation obligations.

President Barack Obama speaks on nonproliferation in Prague's Hradcany Square in April 2009.



“Rules must be binding,” he said. “Violations must be punished. Words must mean something. The world must stand together to prevent the spread of these weapons.”

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton reiterated this emphasis in October 2009, when she noted, “...the United States has launched a major diplomatic effort to forge a renewed international consensus on nonproliferation that is based on the shared interest of meeting a common threat and the requirement that all nations understand

and abide by their rights and responsibilities.”

To implement the priorities outlined by the President and Secretary Clinton, the State Department is leading the U.S. initiative to strengthen the treaty through a balanced review. U.S. priorities include the need for consequences for countries that violate their obligations under the treaty and to prevent countries from escaping the consequences of their violations by withdrawing from the treaty.

The United States is also leading other key initiatives that

implement and demonstrate its commitments to the treaty. These include negotiating a follow-on agreement to the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia, seeking ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, negotiating a treaty to ban production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons, strengthening nuclear safeguards against proliferation and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Ambassador Susan F. Burk, special representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation, leads U.S. efforts in

support of the treaty. Speaking in Geneva in October, Ambassador Burk said the RevCon “will be successful if the parties approach it as a serious opportunity to strengthen the treaty and revalidate its indispensable contribution to regional and global stability and security, and look beyond their differences to find areas where agreement on concrete measures to shore up the global regime can be reached now and where further work and deliberation is needed so that agreement might be possible in the future.”

In keeping with Secretary Clinton’s goals and objectives for employing new tools to meet the demands of 21st-century diplomacy, a multifaceted public diplomacy outreach effort is being prepared throughout the Department to support the delegation to the RevCon.

These efforts include coordinating the United States’ nonproliferation message, goals and expectations between traditional print and radio media, and a new media presence on social networking outlets such as Facebook and Twitter. Other Web-based offerings include an e-journal dedicated to nonproliferation and published by the Bureau of International Information Programs. Rounding out the Department’s outreach efforts is an ongoing open dialogue with key nongovernmental organizations in the field of nuclear nonproliferation.

The RevCon is a critical opportunity for nations to renew their shared commitment to reducing nuclear dangers worldwide and secure a better future. The United States is doing its part to meet that commitment and to move other nations toward a reinvigorated common effort. ■

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*The author is deputy director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Outreach in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation.*

# Guiding Hand

Mentoring helps employees achieve goals */// By Michelle Welch Garren*

All professionals, newly hired and experienced, have moments when they could use some guidance—or a push. There are also times when employees need someone who isn't their boss or co-worker to act as a sounding board.

Having a mentor can fill that gap and help lay the foundation for a successful career or reinvigorate a career begun long ago.

The Department of State's Civil Service Mentoring Program began in 2002 to help employees develop skills for today's work environment. The program enables the Department's best employees to share their experi-

ence and talents to motivate, teach and build relationships. This is essential for ensuring organizational growth and success today and into the future.

The program now involves more than 200 employees who are matched with mentors. The matches include colleagues at the U.S. Agency for International Development. The mentoring program is now one of the most successful programs of its kind in the federal workplace.

## Many Options

As mentoring's popularity grows, so do opportunities for finding a viable mentoring situation. Employees preferring

structure might find the Department's formal mentoring program will suit their needs. It pairs Civil Service and Foreign Service mentors with Civil Service mentees in a structured program that incorporates mentoring with training and other professional development opportunities.

The Foreign Service Mentoring Program, meanwhile, serves entry-level Foreign Service generalists and specialists. Begun in 1994, it provides career development and guidance, and helps entry-level officers acclimate to the Foreign Service culture. Hundreds of ELOs have been paired with experienced Foreign Service mentors, who provide insight into

the Foreign Service experience and expectations. Foreign Service mentor programs are managed by the Office of Continuity Counseling in the Bureau of Human Resources. More information on the program is at <http://hrtstap60communities.hr.state.gov/RecruitmentStaffingEmployment/EmploymentNewHire/Pages/ForeignServiceMentoring.aspx>.

## Situational Mentoring

For those without the time or need for structured mentoring, situational mentoring involves mentors who provide the right help at the right time, usually to help solve a quick problem or uncover a hidden talent. Situational mentors can assist for a specific situation or a projected goal, and they also occasionally provide guidance and support throughout a career. Information on situational mentoring is at <http://hrtstap60communities.hr.state.gov/Workforce/Development/Pages/SituationalMentoring.aspx>.

There is also a situational mentoring program for Locally Employed Staff. Information on that program is at <http://hrtstap60communities.hr.state.gov/Workforce/Development/Pages/CSMentoring-SituationalMentoringforLocallyEmployedStaff.aspx>

The group Returned Peace Corps Volunteers at State recently launched a mentoring program to link entry-level Civil Service and Foreign Service officers with mid-to-senior-level returned volunteers, providing an opportunity for an ex-volunteer to find a mentor having similar experience. For additional information,



Emily Soroko, who has been a mentee and mentor, chats with an attendee at the 2008 Mentoring Forum.



A mentoring workshop participant displays a T-shirt summarizing what workshop participants want to do more of in their mentoring. **Right:** Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Linda Tagliatela delivers a speech to open the 2009 Fall Mentoring Forum.



contact Marcia S. Anglarill at [anglarillms@state.gov](mailto:anglarillms@state.gov).  
 Regardless of the type of mentoring program an employee needs, all employees benefit. For instance, a supervisor said in a recent mentoring program evaluation that his conversations with one employee “have helped me focus on development needs for my other employees, so this program has a very positive ‘trickle down’ effect.”  
 Mentors and mentees say the program helps them gain a better understanding and clearer definition of the mission and objectives of the Department and USAID. They also recognize the program’s ability to help fulfill personal and professional goals.  
 Cheryl Feldman, a passport specialist at the Chicago Passport Agency, has been with the Department just over two years. After finding a project she wanted to take on, she spoke

with a co-worker about the mentoring program and decided a mentor might be just the thing to help her reach her project’s objective. Her mentor, Alexis Kiyak in the Charleston, S.C., Passport Center, helped Feldman achieve her goal of creating orientation materials for new hires at Passport Services.  
 Feldman said while some employees choose mentoring programs for networking opportunities and to fill knowledge gaps, she did so to find someone to give her feedback for implementing improvements.

**Many Uses**

Mentoring fills a variety of needs. Whether it’s sharing expertise or learning from the accomplishments and experience of others, everyone can find a mentoring connection. As one program participant remarked, “I strongly recommend the Civil

Service Mentoring Program to all new Civil Service employees. It is the best program I have ever participated in during my 33 years of federal service. It truly helped me to learn more about my potential and the State Department.”  
 The next formal Civil Service Mentoring Program begins this month and will be preceded by a

Department Notice. Additional information on Civil Service mentoring is at <http://hrtstap60communities.hr.state.gov/Workforce/Development/Pages/CSMentoringHome.aspx>. ■  
*The author is a career development specialist in HR’s Career Development and Training Division.*

# The Next Bollywood?

Embassy readies Indonesia for its close-up // By Jonathan Alan

In 2008, Indonesia was only a decade removed from authoritarian rule and still lagged comparable countries in foreign investment. International companies associated Indonesia with riots, terrorism and military rule. The U.S. Embassy in Jakarta's challenge was to identify areas where it could partner with Indonesia to counter those perceptions and advance relations. The film industry stood out as a potential commercial success story and a way to improve relations more broadly.

Referring to India's thriving film industry, the post asked itself, "Could Indonesia become the next Bollywood?"

Indonesia's film industry produced 80 Indonesian-language films in 2008, an increase of more than 50 percent from two years earlier. But the industry was still missing out on global opportunities. The \$80 billion worldwide film industry had grown more than 31 percent over the past five years, and forecasts predicted that Asian cinema revenues would double over the next five years.

## Regional Interest

Indonesia's neighbors had already begun responding: Thailand pledged \$100 million to develop itself as a regional filmmaking hub. The *Lord of the Rings* trilogy became New Zealand's largest single employer and is credited with driving a 50 percent increase in tourism. And Bollywood topped them all. One forecast had India's entertainment and media industry reaching almost \$30 billion by 2012.

Indonesia was eager to tap into these trends. Although underdeveloped, the local industry is vibrant and creative, reflecting the country's rich cultural traditions combining the visual arts and storytelling. But the government's plan to promote its creative industries as part of its economic strategy had limited success. Nonetheless, Indonesia's film industry was surprisingly open to foreign participation, and several Indonesian filmmakers saw the benefits to partnering with Hollywood.

Indonesia's interest in developing its film sector corresponded nicely with the interests of U.S. film studios. Films are one of the most successful U.S. exports, accounting for nearly \$15 billion in U.S. services trade. Seeking new markets, U.S. movie companies met with

embassy representatives to express interest in Indonesia, saying it appeared to be an attractive proposition. Like India, it offered beautiful locations, cost-effective labor and a large domestic market.

But the filmmakers all said Indonesia had an image problem—it was still associated with the imagery and politics of *The Year of Living Dangerously*. This problem had dampened investment interest, affected bilateral relations and strained business, cultural and military relations.

By helping the nation gain a flourishing film industry, the embassy would help dramatically improve Indonesia's image overseas and advance bilateral relations.

Ambassador Cameron Hume called this the "Bollywood effect."

## Wide Involvement

The embassy put together a strategy to build on these shared interests in film, action that involved multiple embassy sections, including economic, public affairs and the Foreign Commercial Service. A first step was to pull together three key players: Indonesia's film industry, Hollywood and the Indonesian government.

Ambassador Hume met with leading Indonesian filmmakers and producers to discuss the obstacles to growth and express interest in finding ways to work together. The post also deepened ties with the Motion Picture Association of America and its members, including News Corporation, parent company of 20th Century Fox. The post also identified a potential champion, Indonesian Minister of Trade Mari Pangestu, the primary architect of Indonesia's strategy to develop the creative industries.

The embassy also worked with U.S. companies on building ties with their Indonesian counterparts and government officials. On the investment front, it sought increased market access and partnered with local industry to seek regulatory reforms. It also sought opportunities for exchanges and developed cultural events focused on cooperation in film.

By setting events in motion, developing relationships, identifying shared interests, framing ideas and facilitating discussions, the post was able to initiate such actions as a collaboration between NewsCorp, the MPAA and the Ministry of Trade on a plan

to promote cooperation in film. The three organizations agreed to partner on a festival of Indonesia's best films in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, and NewsCorp hosted a gala reception celebrating Indonesian culture and film in Washington, D.C.

The Washington event brought together more than 250 prominent Indonesians and Americans, including members of Congress, Department of State and White House officials and senior entertainment industry executives. Minister Pangestu's delegation included Indonesian business and film industry leaders. NewsCorp Managing Director Rupert Murdoch, Minister Pangestu and U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk each spoke, and the evening concluded with a screening of the celebrated Indonesian film *Laskar Pelangi*, one of many films showcased in that week's film festival.

## Doing Deals

Throughout 2009 and into 2010, a number of U.S. studios pursued development deals with Indonesian counterparts. Furthermore, the U.S. producers of *Eat, Pray, Love* announced that the film, starring Julia Roberts, would be shot in Bali. And the producers of the television show *Survivor* are considering Indonesia as the setting for the show's upcoming season.

These developments marked the end of Hollywood's avoidance of filming in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Indonesian filmmaker Nia Dinata is shooting a feature film in Philadelphia documenting the Indonesian immigrant experience.

Challenges ahead include Indonesia's need for regulatory and investment reforms. Nonetheless, this is a beginning to a partnership that goes beyond economic benefits. As Ambassador Hume explained to Minister Pangestu, "It shows the world that *The Year of Living Dangerously* is over, and that a new chapter of Indonesia's history has begun."

NewsCorp has since nominated Ambassador Hume and the embassy for the Gold Standard Award, based on the mission's promotion of cooperation in the film industry. The award, sponsored by *Public Affairs Asia* magazine, recognizes public affairs best practices. ■

Jonathan Alan is the trade and investment officer at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta.



**Right:** Sharing a laugh at the film festival are, from left, Ambassador Cameron Hume, Indonesian Ambassador to the United States H. E. Sudjadnan and NewsCorp Chairman Rupert Murdoch.  
**Below:** Indonesian Trade Minister Mari Pangestu speaks at the Indonesian film festival.





FLO Unaccompanied Tours Officer Bridget Roddy, left, provides information to FLO Communications and Outreach Officer Erica M Rhodes, center, and FLO Training Specialist Lafayette Greenfield II.

# Qualified Candidates

With the help of the Family Liaison Office and an Executive Order of the President, eligible family members who serve at posts abroad can more rapidly gain Civil Service jobs when they return to the United States.

Executive Order 12721 (5 CFR Part 315.608) enables certain EFMs to be appointed noncompetitively to the Civil Service once they return to the United States. They may be appointed to any federal occupation and grade level for which they are qualified. Their noncompetitive status can reduce the hiring process to as little as two to three weeks.

By hiring EFMs, federal agencies get an employee who has experience gained at post and a higher education. Three-quarters of EFMs

have an undergraduate degree, and half of those have a graduate degree or higher. Their work abroad brought them knowledge of the procedures, work environment and culture of the Department, as well as organizational skills. They also often have security clearances that can be reactivated.

Lastly, EFMs typically want to continue working for the Department upon returning to the United States, said Leslie Teixeira, director of FLO.

Eve Anderson, senior business development advisor for the Executive Office of the Bureau of Administration, said A/EX “loves bringing on family members. They are truly great assets to the team, and bring a wealth of

experience to our office.”

Working for the federal government is “a great opportunity for individuals who have worked for the government overseas to re-establish themselves in Washington, D.C.” said Jennifer Smith, a regional coordinator in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

Family members derive noncompetitive status by serving at least 52 weeks in an overseas Family Member Appointment and receiving a successful Performance Appraisal Report. Their noncompetitive status allows them to be appointed to the Civil Service domestically during three years following the date of their return to the United States to resume residence.

PHOTOGRAPHS: MARC STEWART

**EFMs can help fill U.S. Civil Service jobs quickly** // By Priyanka Ripley

FLO Program Specialist Priyanka Ripley, left, and Communications and Outreach Officer Erica M. Rhodes answer questions about family member employment and FLO services during a FLO on the Road lunchtime outreach event at the Foreign Service Institute.



## Listserv Available

Offices seeking to fill Civil Service jobs can post a job on the Network, FLO's electronic listserv, which is distributed to close to 1,000 EFMs.

The Network receives job postings from a number of Department bureaus and from other agencies, contractors and international organizations. Hiring offices can post jobs by sending the information to [FLOAskEmployment@state.gov](mailto:FLOAskEmployment@state.gov).

"Although the federal job I got was announced on USAJobs.com, my position came through the Network," said a returned EFM, who asked not to be identified. "It was more through networking and the FLO's good efforts in advertising positions that I now have this position."

EFM Nancy Dolce, who was recently named Civil Service Secretary of the Year, said she used the Network to find her current position. "I didn't miss a day of work," she said. "We left post on a Thursday, had a three-day weekend, and I started on Monday."

EUR's Smith said she's a Network subscriber and believes it's the best way to get a federal job. Referring to the computer software used to assess whether federal applicants meet a job posting's qualifications, the initial step in the vetting process, she said "USAJobs' algorithms aren't necessarily meant to find the candidates

with the best qualifications."

For more information or questions, contact Priyanka Ripley at [ripleyps@state.gov](mailto:ripleyps@state.gov). More information on E.O. 12721 is at [www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21651.htm](http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21651.htm).

The Network is a win-win situation. It accommodates families' fluid Foreign Service lifestyles and gives employers the best qualified candidates—whom they can hire in no time at all. ■

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*Priyanka Ripley is FLO's GEI/Employment Program Specialist.*

# Artful Diplomacy

A native of Wyoming, U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso Jeanine Jackson wanted to exhibit art at the U.S. Embassy in Ouagadougou that emphasized the similarities between the native peoples of the Western Plains of the United States and Burkina Faso's migratory people.

She achieved her goal by working with the Art in Embassies program and Senior Curator Bob Soppelsa. Jackson said the resulting exhibition of 12 artworks at her residence "transcends political, national and cultural boundaries and plays an important role in linking cultures.

"Art expresses visually what can be difficult to capture in words, facilitating communication between people who speak different languages," she said. "Each of the works displayed was chosen for these linkages."

## Program Philosophy

Ambassador Jackson's view encapsulates the mission of the Art in Embassies office, a part of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. Established in 1963, the office seeks to use art exhibitions to build bridges between the United States and host countries. It also helps to promote American artists.

The office is headed by Acting Director and Chief Curator Virginia Shore and has 16 professional curators, registrars, publications editors and administrative staff. Its chief

mission is to create temporary exhibitions of original works of art by American artists that will be shown in the public areas of ambassadorial residences. At any given time, some 3,500 works by 3,000 artists with a total value of more than \$350 million are in about 180 ambassadors' residences worldwide. Usually, the art is borrowed from a base of more than 8,000 lenders. The program also has its own small donated collection.

The Art in Embassies program involves a unique private-public partnership that relies on art loaned by private and public collections, foundations, corporations, galleries and, chiefly, living artists.

## Developing Exhibitions

The first step to mounting an Art in Embassies exhibition is a consultation in which an ambassador or ambassador-designate, and the curator and registrar assigned to the country review discuss timeline, budget and logistics, while also brainstorming on possible themes. For themes, the curator keeps in mind the host country and the concept the ambassador wants emphasized.

Many ambassadors choose artists and landscapes of their home states. Others emphasize ethnographic heritage, socioeconomic conditions or such topics as the environment, racism and HIV/AIDS.

In the next step, the curator researches and suggests artists and artworks that capture the exhibition's chosen focus. The art may include paintings, works on paper, sculpture, textiles, ceramics and other

Art transcends boundaries to link cultures

/// By Sarah Tanguy





Art in Embassies Program staff and local workmen install an untitled sculpture by Nick Cave at the embassy in Port-au-Prince. **Below:** Artist Arlene Shechet explains her work to exhibit visitors at the ambassador's residence in Hanoi.

media, and usually involves 10 to 25 works. Curators research the art on the Internet but also try to visit U.S. artists' studios and galleries.

After the list of works for the exhibition is finalized and the loan agreements signed, the registrar prepares to ship the exhibit, and the embassy's geographic bureau assigns a budget to pay for packing and shipping to the site and, afterward, for returning the art to the lenders.

Some bureaus assign the same exhibition budget for each post; others base the budget on other criteria. Sometimes, ambassadors supplement budgets with their own funds—or with their own art. Other factors affecting an exhibition are the circumstances of the host country; the climate, security and architectural features of the residence; and the residence's similarity to a museum or its status as an historic property.





Local workmen install at the ambassador's residence in Moscow art on loan from the Folk Art Museum.

### Exhibition Logistics

The exhibition's registrar solicits bids and selects a professional art-handling company to transport the exhibition. Usually, that company picks up the loaned art and takes it to a secure, climate-controlled warehouse where the shipping crates are built. The crates are then air-freighted to post, where the general services officer, who typically prearranges customs clearance, arranges delivery to the residence and installation of the exhibition. Just prior to the end of an ambassador's tour of duty, the entire process is reversed.

It takes about 10 months to set up an exhibition, including research, planning, shipping, installation and producing an illustrated publication that will act as an educational reference and historical record of the exhibition. The exhibition is then shown for the two and a half to three years that comprise a typical ambassador's tenure at post.

### Expanding Mission

In 2005, Art in Embassies' curatorial mission was expanded to include the creation of permanent collections for all new embassies, consulates and annexes. The office has since installed 34 permanent collections in new diplomatic facilities. The contemporary art in these collections is a mix between works of host-nation artists and American artists. Many of the latter have a connection to the country where the new facility was constructed.

Art in Embassies also has an educational outreach program, the American Artist Abroad initiative. Since 2002, participating artists have traveled to countries where their art is being exhibited and engaged in lectures, workshops, community projects and studio visits. To date, 50 artists have visited more than 40 countries.

The office's curatorial staff has a variety of professional degrees

and a thorough knowledge of American art of all eras, from the colonial to the contemporary. Curators must have skill in marketing, promotion and budgeting, while registrars must have superior attention to detail and accuracy. Both curators and registrars must be adaptable and have the people skills needed to work with ambassadors, lenders and artists.

During 2009, the change of Presidential Administrations presented the office with an active and challenging agenda: New ambassadors were arriving and others were departing, and this meant that curators and registrars were often simultaneously juggling 10 to 15 exhibitions. Each is a collaboration between the ambassador and the curator, and therefore each takes time and presents unique challenges.

With its temporary exhibitions, permanent collections, artist programming and publications, the office of

Art in Embassies pursues a culturally expansive mission and provides international audiences a more nuanced sense of the quality, scope and diversity of art in the United States and the host country.

Diplomats understand the art of diplomacy, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton showed that she understands the diplomacy of art when she said, "The Art in Embassies program reveals the rich history and cultural heritage of the United States and the communal experiences that we share with peoples of different countries, backgrounds and faiths, binding us closer together. Through its temporary exhibitions and permanent collections, the Art in Embassies program intrigues, educates and connects—playing an ambassadorial role as important as that served by traditional diplomacy." ■

*The author is an Art in Embassies curator.*

# Ending on a High Note

Cultural Series Ends 2009 with song and dance /// **By John Bentel**

The Foreign Affairs Recreation Association and the State of the Arts Cultural Series closed out 2009 with a variety of artists that included ballet dancers, a vocalist, an operatic tableau, a classical pianist and a choral group.

Ballet Theatre of Maryland dancers Meagan Helman, Margaret Hannah, Chris Pennix, Justin Allen, Nicole Seitz, Lynne Bellinger and Megan Giroir gave a soaring performance of *Spunky Girl* from *Dawn Dances*, a Celtic dance derived from a melting pot of cultures where Riverdance and ballet meet. "Ballet Theatre of Maryland moves you through the transforming power of American dance, releasing passion, individualism and athleticism in a language more powerful than words," Artistic Director Dianna Cuatto said.

Soprano Michele Baron's beautiful rendition of Puccini's *O mio bambino caro* from *Gianni Schicchi* was also a crowd-pleaser. She has performed as Mimi in *La Boheme*, Maddelena in *Andrea Chenier* and Dolly in *Bittersweet*.

A tableau of the two-act opera *Oh My Son* featured music and lyrics by Marcos Galvany. The music of composer and conductor Galvany has been heard throughout the world. Singers Meghan McCall, Matthew Osifchin, Christina Piccardi and Javier Gonzalez brought world-class voices to the performance, which earned a standing ovation. The opera will premiere at Carnegie



Soprano Meghan McCall sings a selection from *Oh My Son*, accompanied by the opera's composer Marcos Galvany.

Hall next month.

Classical pianist Matthew Odell gave a passionate and nuanced performance of works by Domenico Scarlatti, Felix Mendelssohn and Olivier Messiaen. A piano student since age 10 who has carved out a niche as both a solo and collaborative pianist, Odell is a doctoral fellow at the Julliard School.

The State Department's resident choral group, the T-Tones, presented a Christmas

concert of favorite yuletide songs. Kathryn Schultz impressively conducted the musicians, and Steve Honley was a superb piano accompanist and performer. The program ended with an audience sing-along of holiday tunes that would have put even the most determined Grinch in the holiday spirit. ■

*The author is a computer specialist in the Executive Secretariat.*

## Upcoming Events

Performances are on Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium (unless otherwise noted)

**March 10**

Ashley Cunningham, vocalist, and Andrew Luse, pianist

**March 24**

TBA

**April 7**

Wayne Dorsey, classical pianist

**April 28**

Piano recital featuring students from the State Department and Montgomery College



# Don't Be Blindsided

Window coverings can be a hazard to children // By Steven Jay Sherman

When the staff of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations' Office of Safety, Health and Environmental Management evaluates residential hazards overseas, their focus extends to all family members but especially children, who are very vulnerable to hazards in the home.

Recently, the media have reported that window coverings can be a potential danger to children. While the cords that raise and lower your window shades or blinds may seem harmless, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has received reports of more than 200 strangulation deaths of young children over the past two decades.

Following more than 10 years of focus by the commission, a voluntary industry recall was finally begun in December by manufacturers and major retailers of Roman-style window shades and rollup-style window blinds. The recall is one of the largest voluntary actions of its kind in U.S. history and includes more than 50 million window-covering products.

While the number of fatalities has dropped significantly in recent years following the window-covering industry's voluntary redesign of pull cords, the commission has noted nearly one child strangulation death per month since 2003. Almost all victims were under the age of four.

A child can get in trouble easily and silently and be at risk within seconds of strangulation and death.

With Roman shades, a child's neck can get stuck between the exposed inner cord and the fabric on the backside of the blind. In some instances the cord can get wrapped around the child's neck, pinching tighter and tighter as the child struggles to get free. With rollup blinds, when the lifting loop slides off the side of the blind, a child's neck can become entangled in the loop. In some cases, the child's neck gets between the lifting loop and the rollup blind material, which leads to strangulation.

To minimize these hazards to young children, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Window Covering Safety Council offer the following guidelines:

- Examine all shades and blinds in the home. Make sure there are no accessible cords on the front, side or back.
- Make loose cords inaccessible.

- If the window shade has looped bead chains or nylon cords, install tension devices to keep the cords taut.
- Install only cordless window coverings in homes with young children. Replace window blinds, corded shades and draperies manufactured before 2001 with today's safer products.
- Move all cribs, beds, furniture and toys away from windows and window cords, preferably to another wall.
- Keep all window pull cords and inner lift cords out of the reach of children. Make sure that tasseled pull cords are short and continuous-loop cords are permanently anchored to the floor or wall. Make sure cord stops are properly installed and adjusted to limit movement of inner lift cords.
- Lock cords into position whenever horizontal blinds or shades are lowered, including when they come to rest on a windowsill.



Further information, including the Consumer Product Safety Commission press release "Roman Shades and Rollup Blinds Pose Strangulation Hazard to Children," is available at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) or by calling (800) 638-2722. The Window Covering Safety Council will provide free retrofit kits to consumers who cannot afford to replace corded window products. Detailed information can be found at [www.windowcoverings.org](http://www.windowcoverings.org) or by calling (800) 506-4636.

Take a few minutes to look at the window coverings at home and ask yourself if a young child can possibly become entangled in a cord and be strangled. Also look at the window shades in the child's grandparents' homes and in the daycare center, nursery school and homes of caregivers or babysitters. If your children are grown, ask yourself if you entertain visitors with small children who could be exposed to a potential hazard.

Finally, even the most carefully installed safety devices are not 100 percent childproof, so there is no substitute for proper adult supervision. ■

*Certified Industrial Hygienist Steven Jay Sherman works in the Office Safety, Health and Environmental Management in the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations.*



**U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives**

Patricia A. Butenis of Pennsylvania, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives. Previously, she was deputy chief of mission in Baghdad. Before that, she was ambassador to Bangladesh. Her other postings include Karachi, San Salvador, New Delhi, Warsaw, Bogotá and Islamabad. She also attended the National War College.



**U.S. Ambassador to Poland**

Lee Feinstein of Virginia, an international lawyer, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland. Formerly a fellow at the Brookings Institution, he was national security director to Hillary Rodham Clinton during her presidential campaign. He was previously deputy director of studies and senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. He has held several positions in the departments of Defense and State, including principal deputy director of policy planning. He is married and has two children.



**U.S. Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea**

Alberto M. Fernandez of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. Previously, he was chargé d'affaires in Khartoum, Sudan. Before that, he was director of the Office of Press and Public Diplomacy in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. His postings include Kabul, Amman, Guatemala City, Damascus, Kuwait, Managua, Santo Domingo and Abu Dhabi. He is married and has two sons.



**Assistant Secretary for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs**

Jose W. Fernandez of New York, a lawyer, is the new Assistant Secretary for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs. Previously, he was a partner in the New York office of Latham & Watkins and global chair of the firm's Latin America practice. He has focused on Latin America, Europe and Africa, advising clients on international mergers and acquisitions, financings and trade. He has held key positions in education and the arts.



**U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay**

David D. Nelson of Minnesota, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Oriental Republic of Uruguay. Previously, he was acting assistant secretary and principal deputy assistant secretary for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs. He was director of the Office of Terrorism Finance and Economic Sanctions and director of the Iraq Reconstruction Task Force. His postings include Berlin, Madrid, Bonn, Quito, Montevideo and Merida.



**Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor**

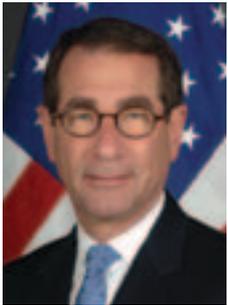
Michael H. Posner of New York, a human rights activist and lawyer, is the new Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Previously, he was executive director and then president of Human Rights First, where he was a leader in refugee protection, advancing a rights-based approach to national security, challenging crimes against humanity and combating discrimination. Before that, he was a lawyer with a Chicago law firm. He is married and has three children.



### U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique

Leslie V. Rowe of Washington, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. Previously, she was ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Solomon

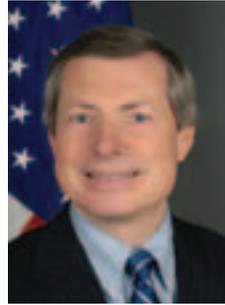
Islands and Vanuatu. Before that, she was deputy chief of mission in Nairobi. Other postings include Bangkok, Lisbon, San Jose, Sao Paulo and Recife, where she was principal officer. She is married and has three children.



### U.S. Ambassador to Spain

Alan D. Solomont of Massachusetts, an entrepreneur, philanthropist and political activist, is the new U.S. Ambassador to Spain, to serve concurrently as Ambassador to Andorra. Previously, he was chairman of the board of the Corporation for National and Community Service. He led several

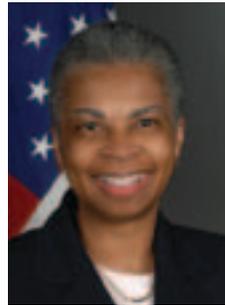
companies involved in health care and elder care. He taught political science at Tufts University. A long-time leader in the Democratic Party, he served as national finance chair in 1997–98 and supported Barack Obama’s presidential campaign.



### U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria

James Warlick of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria. Previously, he was principal deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. He was principal

advisor to Ambassador Paul Bremer in Baghdad and consul general in Moscow. Other postings include Bonn, Manila and Dhaka. He is married to U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia Mary Warlick and has three children.



### U.S. Ambassador to Mauritius and Seychelles

Mary Jo Wills of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles. Previously, she was acting assistant secretary for Southern African Affairs and Public Diplomacy and Public

Affairs in the Bureau of African Affairs. She was deputy principal officer in Milan and has served in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. She is married and has two sons.



**Charles W. "Pete" Dorfled**, 78, a retired Foreign Service technical security officer, died Oct. 5. His postings included Beirut, Prague, Frankfurt, New Delhi, Casablanca and Manila. He retired to Manistee, Mich., in 1985 with 24 years of service. He was president of the Lions Club and enjoyed musket shooting and woodworking.



**Paul L. Laase**, 77, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 26 in Grand Junction, Colo. He joined the Department in 1959 and served in Sydney, Oslo, Rome, Canberra and Brasilia. He retired in 1987 so that his wife Lois could pursue her career as an educator and author. He enjoyed bird-watching, singing, crossword puzzles, bridge, fishing, spending time with his grandchildren and volunteer work.



**Maria "Mary" Landau**, 83, wife of retired Ambassador George W. Landau, died Jan. 10 in Miami, Fla., after a fall that caused a cerebral hemorrhage. She met her husband in 1946 while working for the U.S. Army in Austria. She accompanied him to his posts in Uruguay, Spain, Canada, Paraguay, Chile and Venezuela. She was a gracious hostess who took pride and pleasure in representing her country and refurbishing and entertaining at her three embassy residences.



**Clint A. Lauderdale**, 77, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 11. He served in the Army Counter Intelligence Corps in Germany before joining the Department in 1962. He was posted to Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Brussels, Bonn and Madrid. He was ambassador to Guyana and assistant inspector general. He enjoyed genealogy and served as chairman and board member of the State Department Federal Credit Union and Foreign Service Youth Foundation.

**Michael Pistor**, 79, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 24 of cardiovascular disease in Bethesda, Md. He served as ambassador to Malawi and counselor of the U.S. Information Agency, the top career job in the agency. He was public affairs counselor in London and New Delhi and also served in Uganda, Iran and Cameroon. After retiring in 1995, he served as a senior State Department inspector.



**Bradley J. "Brad" Rosendahl**, 59, a retired Department employee, died Jan. 15 of cancer in Boise, Idaho. He served in the Air Force before joining the Department. He worked overseas and in the United States and retired in 1998. He moved to Boise and worked part-time for AT&T providing worldwide telecommunications support to the White House. He was an avid golfer.

**Eleanor Woodward Sandford**, 95, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 10 of pneumonia in Williamsburg, Va. Her postings included Bonn, Helsinki, Tokyo and Bangkok. She moved to Williamsburg after retiring in 1975. An accomplished performer on piano, flute and recorder, she was president of a music club and accompanist for a women's community chorus. She loved playing bridge and traveling.



**Irene Waring**, 88, widow of Foreign Service officer Robert Waring, who was assassinated in Beirut in 1976, died Nov. 13 from complications of pneumonia in Freiburg, Germany. She lived in Princeton, N.J., where she was involved in many cultural activities. She accompanied her husband on assignments to Morocco, Greece, Germany, Austria, England and Lebanon. She was a talented artist.

# Retirements

## Foreign Service

Alley, James J.	Lawson, George Lester
Barker, Brent A.	Lindly, Kirk David
Boortz, Gerald Lee	Mabazza, Lorraine E.
Camp, Donald	McGuire-Rugh, Karen A.
Cronin Jr., James T.	Meeks, Lisa C.
Curtin, Jeremy F.	Mergens, Stephen J.
De Smet-Howard, Phyllis A.	Mignano, Gary S.
Donovan, Patrick D.	Mills, Bruce T.
Emery, Carol J.	Petruskewic, Henry W.
Eren, Ertan	Ross, Jane S.
Flanagan, Kevin F.	Snead, Donald H.
Gallagher, Michael F.	Tyndal, Jennifer A.
Gilmere, Jack L.	Visick, John N.
Godfrey, Lee W.	Waller, Domenica P.
Gray, Richard N.	Wheelock, Stephen A.
Jones, John M.	

## Civil Service

Acevedo, Melvyn M.	Miller, Lauree Synell
Cline, Cecilia E.	Rampen, Andeny S.
Collins, Mary Horne	Sherrod, Tempy Ann
Filip, David E.	Smith, Emily Yvonne Thomas
Gilpin, Ernestine B.	Sutton, William R.
Greene, Richard L.	Tith, Khlang
Guimarin, Linda M.	Tran, Do Dai
Jantharat, Prawet	Turner, Dollie M.
Krause, Donald L.	Valdez, Marta Elena
Leis, David A.	Williams, David Sager
Mayo, Iris J.	Wyatt, Linda Lee
McGuinness, John P.	

# Noble Efforts Around the Globe

Although the recent snow storms that paralyzed much of the East Coast—including the nation’s capital—pushed media coverage of the disastrous earthquake in Haiti deep inside newspapers and newscasts, Department and USAID colleagues were still pulling extra duty in that devastated country. You’ll find in this issue a lengthy special section describing in detail the efforts at post and throughout the Department to stabilize the chaotic situation by helping Haitians, American citizens and fellow employees cope with unimaginable grief and hardship.

Since it happened some 20 years ago and subsequent events have perhaps dimmed its significance, many consider the Gulf War of 1990-91 ancient history. However, with considerable help from the U.S. embassies in Kuwait and Baghdad, the two former adversaries are working to close that chapter in the two countries’ troubled past.

Last spring, Embassy Kuwait started helping the International Committee of the Red Cross and Kuwaiti and Iraqi governments search for the remains of missing Iraqi troops killed in Kuwait during the Gulf War. Most searches for soldiers missing in action from that war focused on Kuwaitis, but Embassy Kuwait volunteers from several agencies sought to expand and re-energize the search utilizing advanced technology in search and recovery techniques and forensics.

The efforts paid off in November, when the volunteers found in Kuwait the remains of several Iraqi soldiers who had been buried for almost two decades. Buoyed by the discovery, the Iraqi government intensified its search for still-missing Kuwaitis.



Winter or summer, the Olympic Games are a big deal for the host nation—and because of the enthusiasm for the games among American athletes and citizens, they also put extra burdens on the State Department. This year’s Winter Games, followed closely by the Paralympic Games, tested Consulate General Vancouver, but good planning and teamwork with other U.S. agencies ensured smooth sailing for the estimated half-million visitors who crossed the British Columbia-Washington state border or passed through Customs and Border Protection at Vancouver International Airport.

The real estate mantra—location, location, location—perfectly describes the March Post of the Month—Djibouti, a small desert nation located on the strategic and unstable Horn of Africa. This lightly populated, mostly Muslim country has emerged as a pocket of stability and a key partner for the U.S. in that turbulent area. Embassy Djibouti City has grown with the

country’s value to U.S. interests, with more growth expected.

Last but not least, a final salute to our colleagues en route to their final posting: *Charles W. “Pete” Dorfeld; Paul L. Laase; Maria “Mary” Landau; Clint A. Lauderdale; Michael Pistor; Bradley J. “Brad” Rosendahl; Eleanor Woodward Sandford; and Irene Waring.* ■

Rob Wiley  
Editor-in-Chief

**Correction:** The February story on the Department’s change in its subsidy for childcare center tuition in the D.C. area cannot be said to have a relationship to tuition at the childcare center at the Foreign Service Institute, and Diplotots Board member Annie Cocchiaro never made such an association.

## COMING IN APRIL

- >>> 2009 Foreign Service Promotion Stats
- >>> State’s Evolving Green Initiatives >>>
- >>> Embassy Buenos Aires Polishes U.S. Image
- ... and much more!



# SPECIAL GUESTS! DIPLOMATIC CARTOONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

FROM THE BEZPAMET PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS: "GLOOPEN, THE ABSENT-MINDED AMBASSADOR..."



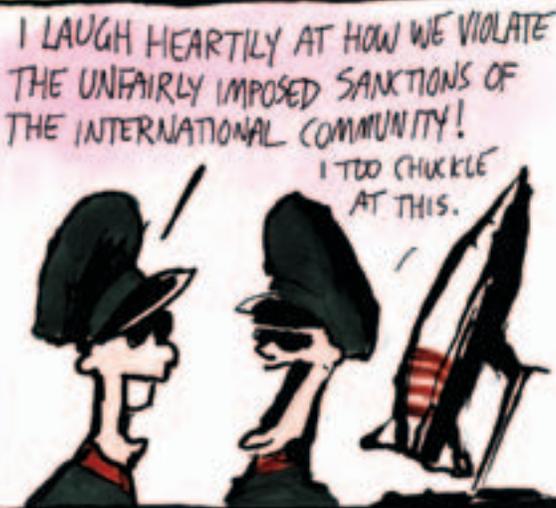
FROM THE ROYAL GLOOMISH KINGDOM'S MONTHLY "DIPLOMACY AND NOTHINGNESS"



FROM THE KIRI KIRI MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ANNUAL NEWSLETTER...



FROM THE WACKOSTAN WEEKLY "ROGUE STATE RANT"...



FROM THE BOVINE REPUBLIC'S "DIPLOCOW DISPATCH"...





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