

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# STATE

DECEMBER 2011

MAGAZINE

## Liberated Libya

DS Team in Benghazi  
Finds Hope Amid Chaos

### **Diamond in the Rough**

Discovering Slovenia's  
Hidden Gem: Ljubljana

### **QDDR Year in Review**

Changes Include  
New Bureaus



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December 2011  
Issue Number 562

# 24

## Post of the Month: Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fairytale setting belies  
real-world issues.



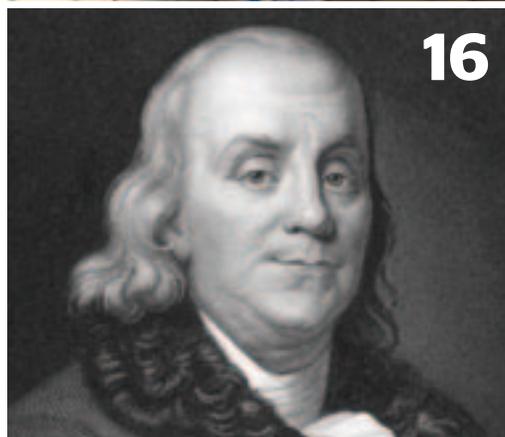
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## On the Cover

Euphoric residents in Benghazi, Libya celebrate the fall of Muammar Gaddafi's 42-year rule (Photo by Dai Xuming/Corbis).



## New Beginnings

For nearly a decade before taking over as editor of *State Magazine*, I covered military and veterans affairs around the globe, first as a combat correspondent in the United States Marine Corps, and later as a civilian journalist for a number of private and government publications. While deployed to Baghdad in 2004-05, I lived and worked next to the Iraq Republican Palace where the Coalition Provisional Authority was headquartered.

It was there I first encountered State Department employees working to promote democracy and rebuild a struggling country.

This issue's cover story takes an inside look at the dangers a similar team of Department employees faced in the aftermath of Libya's recent revolution. Mario Montoya's feature brings back vivid memories of my experiences in Iraq, and should remind us all that Department employees continue to brave even the most dangerous environments in order to promote peace through diplomacy.

My first trip to the Harry S Truman building came in 2006 when I covered a reunion of retired Marine Corps Special Security Detail members as a writer for *Leatherneck Magazine*. The little-known unit was comprised of top graduates from the Marine Security Guard School who helped augment the Diplomatic Security force in the late 1960s. Be sure to check out David Bates' coverage of the Marine Corps Museum's special exhibit that recognizes the distinguished partnership between these two agencies over the past century (Pg. 6).

While editing the content for this issue, I was impressed with the recurring theme I found in many of the submissions. It was the idea that people can make a positive impact on the lives of others by simply taking the time to get to know a little bit about who they are. Whether engaging others on social, cultural, economic, or even personal issues, Department employees demonstrate their

willingness to make a positive difference in other people's lives every day.

Nowhere in this issue is the concept of making a difference more clearly demonstrated than in our article about a mother whose family tragedy brought out the best in her Department colleagues (pg. 10). We also highlight the theme of caring for others through the story of a retired FSO who found his calling in the clergy, and provided spiritual guidance to those with whom he served (pg. 38). Finally, our news article about a Human Resources program that provides unique opportunities for wounded American veterans to continue serving the nation (pg. 12) demonstrates how Department employees are making a positive impact at home as well as abroad.

These are only a few of the many vital interpersonal interactions that Department employees are involved in every day. As we enter a holiday season where many people visit friends and family, I hope that each of you will take time to think about those in the Department who continue to promote peace in disparate regions of the world. It is their tireless, dedicated service to our mission that ensures comfort and safety for us all.

Happy Holidays,  
Isaac D. Pacheco

# STATE

MAGAZINE

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### Deadlines

The submission deadline for the February 2011 issue is December 15. The deadline for the March issue is January 16.

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## A Time for 'Goodbye'

This month marks the end of my tenure as Director General and Director of Human Resources. It has been an honor to work with my talented HR colleagues, who too often go unrecognized or underappreciated. They work to ensure that our recruitment, assignment, professional development and retirement systems support our diverse workforce and enable the Department to meet the critical foreign policy challenges we face now and in the future.

I'd like to highlight a few of our accomplishments during the past two years and to express my appreciation for the support we have received from Secretary Clinton and her leadership team.

- We successfully staffed our priority posts, especially in AIP, with volunteers. Thank you to all who recognized the vital importance of providing Foreign Service expertise to these missions. This willingness to step up is crucial to maintaining a system that gives employees the opportunity to decide when it is best for them and their families to serve in these dangerous places without sacrificing our mission.

- Recognizing the high stress that accompanies these assignments for both employees and their families, HR worked with M/MED and FSI to strengthen support provided during and after service in AIP. The High Stress Out-brief is now mandatory and we encourage all supervisors to take FSI's PT-450 "Working with Returnees from High Stress Posts" course in order to assist colleagues as they transition to less stressful assignments.

- The Diplomacy 3.0 hiring initiative not only increased the Foreign Service by 17 percent and the Civil Service by 5 percent, but also doubled the training complement and provided new positions to support initiatives in high priority areas such as food security, global health and women's issues.

- We made considerable strides in diversity recruitment through aggressive outreach, including social media. We've seen a significant increase in the percentage of African-Americans, Hispanics, and women taking and passing the Foreign Service test. We also substantially increased new hires of disabled veterans.

- We continue to emphasize that performance management is a year-round supervisory responsibility. New training materials and "dashboards" now provide supervisors and bureaus with up-to-date information on the status of work requirements, counseling sessions and evaluations.

- The new Disability/Reasonable Accommodation Division (DRAD) provides one-stop services and assistive technologies to employees. DRAD also partners with our Recruitment office to hire job applicants with disabilities.

- The full range of legally available benefits has been extended to same-sex domestic partners of FS members abroad. A visa plan for non-US citizen partners of employees returning to the U.S. on assignment is now operational.

- New electronic applications and the establishment of a single HR service center in Charleston, S.C., have significantly improved customer service. Plans are in place to enhance and expand these efforts.

- In recognition of the critical role our Locally Engaged Staff play in our operations overseas, new initiatives should come on line in 2012 regarding LE Staff compensation, the salary survey processes and an Alternate Retirement Plan.

While I take great pride in the progress made over the past two years, the credit belongs to a truly outstanding HR front office team and our HR professionals around the world. I also recognize that many challenges, particularly in the current budget climate, remain. It has been an honor to lead these efforts and to work with the men and women of the Department, who no matter whether Foreign Service, Civil Service, or Foreign Service National, share an unwavering commitment to service.

Nancy J. Powell  
Director General

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Jeff Levine, director of the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment shows the redesigned Web site to Diplomats in Residence Coordinator Linda Cheatham.



## Site's Redesign Boosts Customer Satisfaction

After a complete redesign of the Department's careers.state.gov Web site, user satisfaction has never been higher, according to the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment.

The site was redesigned from the ground up, said REE Webmaster Lorelei Bassi. "It was as drastic as you could get."

Bassi said entire sections of the site were rewritten or presented differently, shifting from a heavy emphasis on text to more use of images and informational graphics. REE took action following a 2010 Department analysis that found the site hard to navigate, which made it difficult to find relevant information.

Once the redesign went live in January, site visits began increasing. The most recent customer satisfaction survey since the redesign gave the site a record score of 82 out of 100 for the second consecutive month—higher than the average private sector Web site score, according to REE.

The site's highlight is its Engage tab, where potential candidates and current Department staff can interact directly. Now, applicants really are engaging with the Department, to

the tune of 36 million forum views in just 10 months. REE Marketing Manager Rachel Friedland said the Engage tab encourages one-on-one communication.

"Interested prospects and candidates can interact and converse with employees who can provide valuable insight into the realities of the careers and share their own experiences about the selection and hiring processes," she said.

REE Director Jeff Levine agrees with Friedland on the value of interaction on the site. He believes engagement is crucial to communicating the Foreign Service experience, and that one of the strongest aspects of the new design is the emphasis on forums. He attributes high customer satisfaction to the site's excellent functionality and the office's sincere efforts to be as transparent as possible about its processes and challenges.

"We answer all questions quickly and openly, consciously trying to convey that there are real people running our processes who understand the frustration and anxiety many candidates feel in trying to interact with a large bureaucracy," he said.

# Entry-Level Conference Promotes Professional Development

When Mission India officials wanted to organize a conference for entry-level Foreign Service professionals, or ELPs, for posts in the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs on short notice, they knew just what to do. They rented an elephant, finagled some fire eaters and convinced eminent Department and SCA leaders to attend and inspire the ELPs.



Performers of Sufi devotional music entertain at the ELP meeting.

The September conference at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi involved more than 175 ELPs and featured a bazaar at Deputy Chief of Mission Donald Lu's residence, where there were elephant rides, local crafts and henna body decoration, an Indian tradition.

SCA Assistant Secretary Robert Blake spoke at the event and said the region was of increasing strategic importance for U.S. foreign policy.

The event featured seven professional development breakout sessions led by Embassy New Delhi leadership on such topics as bidding, performance evaluations, working with Washington and the interagency community, and partner and family employment issues.

Arriving in the embassy Jeep with lights blazing, the regional security officer and several Marine Security Guards interrupted the ELPs' lunch with a surprise crisis-response activity in which they used teamwork and creativity to transport simulated casualties.

Director General Nancy Powell, Ambassador A. Peter Burleigh and DCM Lu led a panel titled "SCA: Then and Now" and spoke on the evolution of U.S. policies in the SCA region. Later at the ambassador's residence, ELPs mingled with cohorts from the Indian government and other Delhi-based diplomatic missions at an impromptu dance party featuring Sufi devotional music.

During other sessions, the ELPs were told about public outreach best practices and reminded to take care of themselves and their families and "enjoy the ride." Participants also attended offsite sessions at local schools and nongovernmental organizations. At an orphanage, Rakhi Singh, of Embassy New Delhi's immigrant visa section, taught the ELPs about inter-country adoption, and at a five-star hotel, Foreign Service officer Melania Arreaga instructed them in the best practices for official visits. A panel of ELPs from Mission Kabul spoke to the ELPs about serving in a war zone.

The last half of the conference focused on the future of the Foreign Service and innovations for the Department. The panel then offered ideas for improvement to DG Powell.

A Washington, D.C., area golf outing and auction held by the nonprofit organization Compass Rose Charities in October raised at least \$25,000, a portion of which will go to the Fallen Diplomats Scholarship Fund. CRC supports employees and families of the U.S. intelligence and diplomatic communities through immediate financial assistance, scholarships and donations to other tax-exempt nonprofits.

The Fallen Diplomats Scholarship Fund is administered by the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund, a nonprofit founded in 1986. After the 1998 bombings at the U.S. embassies in East Africa, FEEA established a special diplomatic fund to cover the college costs of children who lost a parent in those attacks. More information is at <http://www.feea.org/programs/emergency-assistance/agency-specific-funds/151-diplomatic-fund>.

FEEA also runs the Fallen Diplomats Campaign, which aims to raise \$750,000 in private donations to provide full college scholarships to the seven children in college (or not yet entered) who lost a diplomatic parent to terrorism between 1998 and 2003. If it reaches its goal, FEEA also hopes to extend eligibility to children who may lose a parent to terrorism in the future.

At this year's event, State Department employee Howard Kavalier spoke to the audience of the painful effects of losing his wife in the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombing in Nairobi. Other guests included retired Gen. James Clapper, director of National Intelligence; John Schimdtt, former New York Jets center and part of the Super Bowl III team; and Jets teammate Greg Buttle, a former all-pro linebacker.

## Outing Raises Scholarship Funds



## Kenyan Conference Focuses on Health

In October, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Scott Gration helped that nation's government kick off the Let's Live! campaign by convening a conference on reducing mortality in Kenya by 50 percent in 2012.

The campaign expands the focus of such U.S.-sponsored programs as the Global Health Initiative to include noncommunicable diseases, in addition to HIV/AIDS and maternal and child health issues. The initiative will tackle the leading causes of mortality in Kenya and identify best practices that can be applied throughout Africa.

Ambassador Gration called for an outcome-based approach to improving health status in Kenya and stressed the need for affordable and sustainable programs that support the nation's policies in favor of low-income citizens.

"Poor women in Kenya give birth in unsanitary conditions because they don't have the 500 shillings (five dollars) to be admitted to a hospital," he said. "Our job is to focus on the beneficiaries—Kenyans who want and deserve to live."

The conference drew more than 200 participants from 88 organizations and agencies, including the Kenyan government, implementing partners, United Nations, and nongovernmental organizations. Senior U.S. agency representatives in attendance included U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Raj Shah, Department of State Global Health Initiative Executive Director Lois Quam and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Global Health Deputy Director Donald Shriber.

Roundtable discussions and peer reviews helped attendees reach consensus on ways to reduce mortality. Conference themes included leveraging donor support and innovation to build on existing health



Ambassador Scott Gration visits with children at an orphanage in Nanyuk.

infrastructure, focusing interventions on women and girls, and adjusting development assistance to strengthen Kenya's capacity to deliver quality health services.

Ida Odinga, wife of the nation's prime minister, lauded the more than 50 years of Kenyan-U.S. partnership in reducing the incidence of diseases such as malaria and more recently HIV, and encouraged agencies, organizations and donors to "stand as partners" to build on the goodwill generated in Kenya in order to reduce mortality and improve health there.

## Exhibit Highlights DS Partnership with Marines

More than 75 guests from the public and private sectors attended the Oct. 4 opening of a "Partners in Diplomacy" exhibit at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va. The three-month exhibit, assembled by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and its public affairs team, showcases the Department's longstanding partnership with the Marine Corps to enhance security at U.S. diplomatic facilities worldwide.

Marine Security Guards are a critical part of a multi-layered approach to security at 153 U.S. posts, preventing unauthorized access to classified government information and equipment, and protecting U.S. citizens and property within the missions during crisis situations.

Under Secretary for Management Patrick F. Kennedy welcomed guests to the new exhibit and lauded Marines for their service.

"Today the Marine Security Guard is best characterized by the words professional, reliable and effective," he said. "I cannot imagine a partner organization that would be more suited to the solemn duty we entrust than the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group."

Diplomatic Security Service Acting Director Justine Sincavage cited recent cases where MSGs provided critical onsite information to the DSS on urgent crises at U.S. missions overseas, facilitating decision-making on security matters by Department leadership in Washington.

MSGs are supervised at U.S. diplomatic missions in 141 countries around the world by the DS regional security officers who oversee embassy security programs. Marine Corps Deputy Commandant Lt. Gen. Richard Tryon reminded the gathering that DS is the only

nonmilitary agency to have ever commanded Marines, "and we do not give up command of our Marines easily."

Depicting a unique interdepartmental relationship spawned by a 1948 Memorandum of Agreement, the exhibit consists of several large display panels with text and photos portraying six decades of DS-MSG cooperation. The exhibit also features many historic artifacts of courageous MSG service at sensitive and high-threat posts, including Marine Corps items salvaged after hostile assaults against U.S. embassies in Saigon, Beirut, Nairobi and elsewhere during the past 25 years.

The exhibit closes Jan. 12 and will re-open briefly in the Exhibit Hall at Main State later in the month.



A display case at the exhibit features historical items from Marine Security Guard service at U.S. missions overseas, including mementoes recovered after terrorist bombings.

## TV Host Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month



In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Department's Hispanic Employees Council of Foreign Affairs Agencies, Office of Civil Rights and Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs invited Univision Network anchor María Elena Salinas (pictured above) to reflect on how she and the Spanish-language media giant have contributed to the empowerment of the nation's more than 50 million Hispanic Americans.

At the event, Deputy Secretary Bill Burns highlighted the achievements of Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs María Otero, Assistant Secretary for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs

José Fernandez, Special Envoy for Energy Affairs Carlos Pascual and ambassadors Carmen Lomellin, Vilma Martínez and Raúl Yzaguirre. The Department has more than 1,000 Hispanic employees.

"We are determined to have a Department that represents and reflects America," said Burns. He thanked HECFAA for seeking more diversity in the State Department.

"All through our national life—in government, the private sector and civil society—people of Hispanic ancestry are building bridges to countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean," he said. "They are helping to construct the prosperous and secure hemisphere that the people throughout the Americas want and deserve, and that represents the highest goal of U.S. policy in the region."

An influential Hispanic American, Salinas co-hosted the first Democratic and Republican presidential candidate forums in Spanish on Univision in 2007.

"What we do in Spanish-language media goes beyond informing," she told the gathering. "Some people call it advocacy journalism."

As the official spokesperson for "Ya es Hora" (It's Time), a national civic engagement campaign, Salinas engages Hispanics in American political dialogue. She said U.S. politicians are now engaging the Hispanic community more than ever and recognize Hispanics have political and economic clout.

HECFAA's other Hispanic Heritage Month events included volunteer activities to feed the homeless. More information is at HECFAA's page on Facebook.



## Feds Feed Families Ceremony Honors Department Contributions

Federal employees donated a record 5.7 million pounds of food over the summer in the Feds Feed Families food drive, far surpassing the goal of 2 million pounds. In recognition of the Department's having collected more than 12,000 pounds of the total, Director General Nancy Powell received a specially minted coin at the drive's closing ceremony in October. The bureau she heads, Human Resources, contributed 5,000 pounds of the total.

# One Year Later

New bureaus among many coming QDDR changes // By Ed Warner

The creation of three new bureaus by year's end is only part of a series of changes called for in the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). In the year since its introduction, QDDR has also led to other, less extensive changes such as creation of a foreign aid analysis Web site that responds to the QDDR goal of increased transparency.

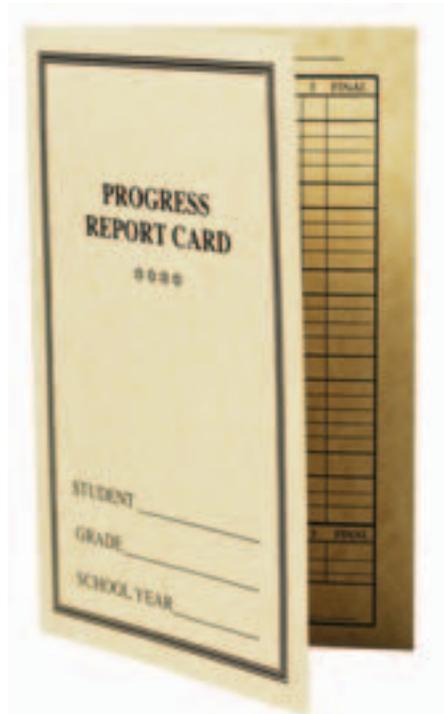
Introduced at a town hall meeting last year by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, the QDDR called for elevating several Department missions by making them the focus of new bureaus: Energy and Resources, Counterterrorism, and Conflict and Stabilization. Department Executive Secretary Stephen Mull says he expects all new bureaus to be established before the year's end. The process of standing up the bureaus will include redefining and reorganizing a number of positions from predecessor offices to produce a more rational Department organization in support of QDDR goals. The Department is also briefing Congress on the organizational changes that will assist it in its oversight responsibilities.

Other QDDR goals include increased transparency regarding information and greater use of leading-edge technologies for communication. The Department's creation

of an online Foreign Assistance Dashboard is evidence of progress on the latter issue. The online tool lets users examine, research and track U.S. foreign assistance investments, and received more than 20,000 site visits in its first month. A new two-minute video introducing Ambassador David Shear to the Vietnamese public demonstrates the Department's dedication to the former issue. The Bureau of International Information Programs, which produced the video, said it has already garnered 5,500 hits on U.S. Embassy in Hanoi's American Center YouTube page, and was broadcast by Vietnamese television networks.

QDDR's Web site, <http://qddr.state.gov>, provides a thorough list of these and other incremental improvements. The site also includes a section where visitors are encouraged to suggest their own ideas.

The site also notes how USAID is developing an online training course to meet the QDDR's request for increased interagency cooperation so that each organization's staff can arrive at post with better knowledge of each others' programs. This makes them better able to engage in political section demarches, public affairs grants, law enforcement training programs and counternarcotics efforts.



According to the Web site, the QDDR is also making progress in changing the Department's leadership culture. For instance, the QDDR's call for ambassadors to emphasize innovation, prudent risk-taking and fluency in the interagency environment has led the Director General to emphasize these qualities in the nomination and selection process for chiefs of mission, deputy chiefs of mission and principal officers.

The Foreign Service Institute, meanwhile, has revamped the ambassadorial seminar, created a one-day seminar for deputy assistant secretaries and plans to revamp the deputy chief of mission course to increase emphasis on interagency leadership. It has also launched a series of three distance learning courses on performance management and evaluation and, with the support of the Cox Foundation, offered pilot workshops in the field for first-time supervisors of American employees and emerging Foreign Service National leaders.

Jeremy Curtin, the Bureau of Human Resources senior adviser focusing on QDDR, summed up the Department's effort so far saying, "The new bureaus certainly stand out as clear and easily understood achievements, but good work is being done throughout the Department." ■

*The author is deputy editor of State Magazine.*

## Civil Service Interested in Overseas Postings

Asked whether they would be interested in deploying overseas as temporary members of the Foreign Service, 4,722 of the 6,360 Civil Service employees responding to an August survey said they would. The Bureau of Human Resources conducted the survey in response to a QDDR goal of providing deployment opportunities overseas to Civil Service employees, for career development and to help close experience and skills gaps.

The survey, which assessed Civil Service employees' interest in temporary Foreign Service assignments, also found 23 percent of respondents interested in converting to Foreign Service positions. More than 1,000 survey respondents said they were primarily interested in full tours for a year or more, while more than 2,000 others said they would be interested in both full tours and temporary assignments.

According to HR Management Analyst Jason Greer, respondents viewed the challenges associated with embassy duty as career development opportunities.

Among respondents interested in full tours overseas, 42 percent said they would accept any type of post, including hardship, danger and unaccompanied posts. Approximately 45 percent of employees interested in full tours said they'd accept an assignment in any world region, and 39 percent said they'd be willing to serve multiple tours.

Although nearly three-quarters of respondents were interested in serving abroad, many mentioned barriers that would prevent them from actually bidding on an assignment. Among the top concerns: the availability of jobs when they return, family hardship and lack of bidding options.

Although a sizable portion of Civil Service employees may be willing to serve overseas in FS positions, at least temporarily, Greer said HR must still ascertain whether they have the skills overseas posts need and how they can be rotated to overseas roles without harming the Department's stateside operations.



## Who Is GINA?

While the name GINA might sound like that of a coworker, it is actually an acronym for the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act, a body of law that protects employees and candidates against discrimination in employment and harassment in the workplace. The act prohibits the use of genetic information to discriminate and restricts private and public employers, including executive branch agencies, from requesting, requiring or purchasing genetic information.

GINA complements statutes already in the ADA, or the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of a “manifested condition” that rises to the level of the legal term “disability.” GINA, on the other hand, prohibits discrimination and harassment based on genetic information, not the actual manifested condition.

As we live longer, we find new ways to stay healthy or prevent future health problems through genetic testing and genome decoding. GINA was enacted so that individuals with concerns about discrimination based on their genetic information would be able to take advantage of these genetic tests and still protect their genetic information. In light of advanced technologies in human biology, a law such as GINA is a natural addition to the bases already protected under discrimination law, including gender, race, color and religion. The act applies when employees or protected individuals discuss their family genetic history and that genetic information is used against them in selection for a job, promotion, assignment or other employment actions.

People have unwittingly violated the act’s provisions sometimes with the best of intentions. For example, a colleague may casually mention that his father has heart disease. If the supervisor, in an attempt to be kind and understanding, removes difficult assignments or uses a soft approach with the individual to help him out, this “kind” gesture could prevent that employee from taking advantage of potential promotion opportunities and therefore violate GINA.

Some employees reading this article may think GINA will never apply to them. They

might think that, in legal terms, it only applies to severe disorders and may say, “I never had a genetic test in my life, nor do I plan to.” Think again. GINA covers genetic tests not only for the individual but also disorders in family members and what many of us simply know as family medical history. Drug tests that monitor changes in genes? Those are covered by GINA. Amniocentesis? GINA. Any genetic services, even counseling or education, are covered by GINA.

As with most discrimination laws, an in-depth legal analysis is required to fully determine GINA’s applicability and impact. It is a body of law with many intricacies and complex considerations that apply if, for example, one accidentally acquires the genetic information of another person. It is important to recognize these issues if they appear in your office conversations, employment settings or supervisor/employee meetings. When someone discloses what appears to be genetic information, employees and managers should remember GINA and make sure to act, or abstain, as appropriate.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Robinson".

John M. Robinson  
Office of Civil Rights

# FSO in Crisis

Discovering State's heart in its people

*Story and Photos by Susan N. Stevenson*

"Don't give up too much of your life to work," a fellow Foreign Service officer once told me, "because the building doesn't love you back." She meant that the State Department's bureaucracy might not necessarily acknowledge, let alone reward, an FSO's hardships.

During my nearly 20 years as an FSO, I gave up some of my life to work. I spent three months in the Middle East while newly pregnant and separated from my husband. I put in a fourth year at a high-intensity post with long hours and little control over my

schedule. I took leave without pay to keep my family together while I studied Chinese for two years.

But when my family experienced a personal tragedy in September, we were overwhelmed by the Department's support. Its staff mobilized emergency visitation travel, involved medical units on three continents and told us from the very beginning that our family came first. I came to find: The building did love me back and was willing to take care of my family.

In September, our eldest daughter Hadley,

who was born in Mexico and raised in Asia, began studying at a boarding school near London. At month's end I was awakened by a midnight call from the school: Hadley had been injured in a playground accident. I woke my husband and called the school guardian, who was with Hadley at the hospital. We learned a heavy timber beam supporting a swing had collapsed on top of her, snapping her spine.

By the time we spoke to her at the hospital, she said she couldn't feel her legs. The doctor said there was no immediate need for surgery, given the extent of the damage, but he was getting a second opinion.

We frantically tried to book plane tickets from Chiang Mai, Thailand, where we live, to London and had to book through Thai Airways' Los Angeles office for a flight in the morning. I e-mailed the ambassador, deputy chief of mission and my deputy, telling them what had happened and explaining that I'd be out for at least a week.

I wasn't thinking of the Department's bureaucracy; I was thinking of getting to the United Kingdom as soon as possible.

But others were working to bring the bureaucracy into action. My deputy arrived at work early that morning to research emergency visitation travel, confirm the details and prepare a cable, all before we were on the connecting flight out of Bangkok. The ambassador, meanwhile, told me to take as much time as needed and expressed her concern. The regional medical officer had already contacted the U.S. Embassy in London to alert them and looped in the Office of Medical Services (MED) chief of foreign programs, a good friend from our Beijing days.

During our 11-hour flight to London, the RMO there contacted my sister-in-law to confirm Hadley's location and find out what was happening. He learned Hadley had undergone 9 1/2 hours of surgery to repair her



Hadley Stevenson, center, "stands" on a tilt table with her mother, right, and sister Willa.

back. But her spinal cord was badly damaged, with the nerves exposed. The surgeon later told us that he had only seen one or two other breaks as bad as Hadley's.

We arrived at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital outside London the same evening, and messages from MED were waiting for us. Within 24 hours, there was an outpouring of support as colleagues heard that our daughter had been injured. From my ambassador and colleagues in Thailand to the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, I received a steady stream of messages expressing sympathy and support.

Within 48 hours, as it became clear that our daughter was paralyzed from the waist down, colleagues and friends in Washington were working on a possible "Y tour," which would let us transfer to London for a year while Hadley recuperated. Embassy London's deputy management officer, human resources officer and one of the political officers were all colleagues from Beijing. As soon as they heard the news, they reached out to offer us support. Did we need access to a Department computer? What about access to the Internet at their homes? If we came to London, would we need housing with wheelchair access? We were so focused on our daughter's care and prospects that it was heartening not to have to worry about the next steps.

On Sunday, four days after the accident, Embassy London's RMO visited us at the hospital. He said he'd get the paperwork necessary to fill out the bureaucratic forms. Meanwhile, our friend in MED had already researched Washington-area rehabilitation centers and sent us the link for the National Rehabilitation Center, which our Irish surgeon knew well. We were therefore confident that our daughter was receiving top-notch care for the duration of her three-month hospitalization, and that we had options for her continued rehabilitation after discharge.

After 10 days, I returned to Thailand to tend to our other two children and to meet with my embassy colleagues. I was again struck by my colleagues' support and care and by how the Department's bureaucracy was stepping in to help. The Bureau of Human Resources and MED clearly outlined the next steps for our curtailment and transfer, smoothing the way, and my post's front office was very understanding about my need to curtail, despite leaving Chiang Mai severely understaffed.

The latest on Hadley is that she is doing very well and should be able to leave the hospital late this month or in early January.

When the chips were down, I have seen firsthand the extraordinary lengths that the Department of State will go to take care of its people. The building really does love you back. ■

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*The author is consul general in Chiang Mai, Thailand.*



**Above:** Hadley practices a back-wheel balance in her wheelchair. **Below:** The Stevenson family gathers at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in London. From left are children Hugo, Hadley (seated) and Willa; at rear are parents Susan and Mark.



# Win-Win for Warriors

Wounded vet helps Department tackle fitness

By Kevin Casey

The Department has a newly mapped indoor walking course to promote employee wellness, thanks to Operation Warfighter, a Department of Defense program aimed at providing temporary assignments and internships for service members recuperating from wounds and illnesses at military treatment facilities.

Judy Ikels, chief of the Work Life Division in the Office of Employee Relations, knew an indoor walking course was needed at the Harry S Truman Building to replace an earlier one lost during the facility's remodeling. She wanted to see if a wounded U.S. military veteran was available to take on the task.

She asked ER's Disability Reasonable Accommodation Division (DRAD) if they could find one, and DRAD, which attends career fairs targeted to people with disabilities, wounded warriors and disabled veterans, came through. The office referred Army Sgt. Maj. Karen Bolden who is legally blind in one eye and has clouded vision in the other. After 27 years as a chaplain's assistant in the Army Chaplain Corps, Bolden was at the Army's Washington, D.C., area Warrior Transition Unit for medical treatment.

"I thought about my eyesight constantly, stressed over it constantly," said Bolden. "I was not ready to retire. I was very depressed and down about my future. The walls close in on you."

DRAD Disability Resource Analyst Carlynn Marsh reviewed Bolden's resume, saw she had been a personal fitness coach and had her own wellness Web site, and thought she could provide the service Ikels needed. Since Bolden needed to regularly visit a local doctor, DRAD orchestrated a project that worked with her schedule.

"The number-one work requirement for a person in the Wounded Warrior program is to get well," said Ikels. "Their doctors' appointments come first."

DRAD Program Assistant Mark Bisson helped Bolden plot the new indoor walking course, measuring corridors and sketching maps for varied, half-mile routes on floors two through seven. Bolden then took the information to her desk to create a finished product using computer skills that used assistive technologies available to Department employees.

DRAD's Scott Duncan, who specializes in assistive technology,



Charmaine Iversen, manager of the IRM Program for Accessible Computer/Communication Technology, speaks with a wounded veteran at a Wounded Warrior Career Fair in 2010. (Photo by Lora Budzier).

## Walking Course One of Several Wellness Programs

The Department's Wellness Council, which includes Judy Ikels and representatives of the Office of Medical Services and the Bureau of Administration's facilities and safety programs, has spurred such advances as new lockers and showers at HST for bike commuters or lunch-time exercisers. There is also a Wheels4Wellness loaner bike program. In the HST cafeteria, a nutritionist provides meal tips onsite once a week, there's a weekly farmers market and the food service contractor is providing healthier choices. MED offers several iterations of the Personal Empowerment Program to help motivated employees to make healthier life choices. Designed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Cooper Institute, the weekly sessions are designed to move employees from contemplating active lifestyle changes to making them. The Department also provides yoga classes in several locations, and annual special-focus sessions and health fairs. More information about many of these wellness programs, including the walking course, is at <http://med.m.state.sbu/dasho/healthpromotion/default.aspx>. "Wellness is important," said Ikels. "It improves employee engagement, productivity and how employees approach work overall. Wellness efforts save money by lowering health care costs to the Department."



The Disability and Reasonable Accommodation Team reviews maps that Operation Warfighter intern Sgt. Maj. Karen Bolden created to update the indoor walking course. From left, are Program Assistant Mark Bisson, Disability Resource Analyst Carlynn Marsh, Bolden and Selective Placement Coordinator Michael Wolfe (Photo by Judy Ikels).

provided Bolden with voice-to-text and text-to-voice software. Other devices allowed her to apply her remaining sight: a keyboard with oversized letters, zooming software for digital documents and a magnifier for handwritten notes and papers. It was Bolden's first encounter with this type of assistive technology, and she was excited.

"With just a regular computer, I would struggle to see. Now, even with my disability, I could still give," she said.

An Army occupational therapist also issued her a set of the same gear for home use and to take with her for future jobs.

On each page, Bolden's map charts a path from one floor's work of art to the next—a world tour of pictures ranging from the pyramids to the Taj Mahal. A supplemental guide offers more information on many landmarks pictured.

"I think she really blossomed here," Ikels said. "That was her doing. We just gave her a place to do it and provided a few reasonable accommodations."

"I don't know an office that doesn't have some short-term project where they need assistance," she added.

After discovering assistive technology and regaining her confidence at the Department, Bolden said she wanted to put her lifetime of Chaplain Corps experience to use, so she obtained an internship at the Armed Forces Chaplain Board at the Pentagon.

"I'm working in my field again," she said, adding that she hopes to return to duty with the board.

Operation Warfighter is "a win-win program," said DRAD HR Specialist Michael Wolfe. "For the Department, it doesn't cost us anything, and for the wounded warriors, it provides an entrée back to the working world during their convalescence."

Those with a short-term project or a full-time job for a wounded warrior can contact Wolfe at (202) 663-1700 or [WolfeML@state.gov](mailto:WolfeML@state.gov). ■



Diplomatic Security Special Agents Michael Jeffress, left, and Nathan Hebert, right, of the Secretary of State's protective detail, assist Marine Cpl. Michael Martinez of the Wounded Warrior Project at a country music concert in September. The agents had also provided route security for the D.C. Soldier Ride, a rehabilitative cycling challenge sponsored by the Wounded Warrior Project in May (Photo by Nicole Deal).

*The author is a writer with State Magazine.*



From left, retired Foreign Service officers Debbi Schwartz, Frank Crigler and Jane Florence share stories from the field at a quarterly luncheon organized by The Carolina Friends of the Foreign Service in Durham, N.C., in April (Photo by H.R. Malpass).

# Camaraderie & Current Affairs

Retired FSO groups meet across the United States

By Kevin Casey

It is unlikely for a neighbor to call across the property line while raking leaves on a gray fall day: “That snake meat in Hong Kong, I’ve never seen another place where you could get it.”

It’s even less likely the other neighbor would lean on his or her rake with a wistful smile and say, “Yeah, I’ve been looking for that, too.”

Quietly retired to a suburb of Seattle, former Foreign Service Officer David Hughes misses talking with his peers about snake meat and other adventures from three decades circling the globe for the Department.

“I had an assignment in Budapest,” he recalled, “and people used to get into arguments over whether Prague or Budapest

is a more beautiful city. You can’t do that here. People will think you’re sounding uppity.”

However, twice a year in Seattle, retired members of the Foreign Service can argue the relative beauty of Eastern European capitals without fear. They do so at get-togethers hosted by the Foreign Service Retirees of the State of Washington, one of 16 FSO retiree groups across the country, some meeting as often as monthly. The groups, listed at [www.tfsg.org](http://www.tfsg.org), are made up of veterans of the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Commercial Service, Department of Defense and others whose careers took them from embassy to embassy. The groups balance social time with guest

speakers on U.S. policy and foreign affairs.

Hughes said the comment of another Seattle FSO retiree reflects how many of the group’s members feel: “I really enjoy the speakers, and it’s great getting some of these prominent people, but the biggest thing is chatting with someone I haven’t seen since Syria or Buenos Aires.”

FSO retiree groups have hosted foreign ministers, senior diplomats, agency heads, award-winning academics, outstanding authors, scientists, lawyers, economists and, in the words of John Wood of the Foreign Service Group of Central Texas, “enough U.S. ambassadors to field a football team.”

The Central Texas group schedules speaker

luncheons every other month in Austin, with additional events, such as a wine-and-cheese get-together in a sculpture garden, a visit to a Gilbert and Sullivan light opera and a movie night at Austin's Mexican American Cultural Center.

In Seattle, Hughes leverages his University of Washington connections, who agree to fly in prominent speakers and pay for their lodging if, once the speakers have addressed the retirees group, they will also present a lecture at the college. In this way, Hughes landed Washington-native Ryan Crocker, now Ambassador to Afghanistan and former ambassador to Iraq and Pakistan.

When Hughes books big-name speakers like Crocker, the World Affairs Council of Seattle and executives from local employers Microsoft, Starbucks, Boeing and Amazon.com will often ask for time as well. "You could say we are getting double, triple or quadruple duty out of our speakers," he said.

The six New England states share the Foreign Affairs Retirees of New England, which meets in Boston in winter and rotates its location through the remaining states in spring and fall. Because members travel to attend, the group's president Charles Ahlgren selects venues having multiple attractions, such as a Shaker village or a museum.

"One time, in Connecticut, there was a museum display on diplomats who had rescued people during the Holocaust," he said.

Meetings of the Foreign Service Retirees of Maryland focus on current affairs.

"I try to pick speakers whose expertise is related to something in the news," said member Henry Precht. "We had Mike Mandelbaum speak about the economic crisis and American diplomacy." Mandelbaum is director of the American Foreign Policy program at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

That approach makes sense to New England retiree Ahlgren. "This was our life," he said. "It's not like we retire and forget about foreign affairs forever."

Ahlgren said he'd like to see Foreign Service retirees write op-ed articles for publications and letters to the editor whenever FSOs are maligned or misunderstood in the media. In late 2007, he authored an article for the *Providence Journal* in response to negative reporting on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad's FSO manpower crisis.



**Top:** Members of the Foreign Affairs Retirees of New England (FARNE) gather after their luncheon at a Warwick, R.I., mansion in October. They included from left Michael Orlansky, Ambassador Thomas N. Hull, FARNE Corresponding Secretary Elizabeth Barnett, Ambassador Thomas Simons, Jill Hull, FARNE President Charles A. Ahlgren, Margaret Q. Simons, Kenneth A. Kurze and the event's speaker, Ambassador John A. Cloud (Photo by J. Archibald). **Bottom:** Retired Foreign Service officer John Wood of The Foreign Service Group of Central Texas thanks Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen, diplomat in residence at the University of Texas at Austin, for his speech to the group in Austin, Texas, in June (Photo by Mae Scheib).

"The Foreign Service in today's dangerous and complex world badly needs the public's support," he wrote.

"One of the best ways to enjoy your retirement years is to sit around a table having a good meal and a conversation with people who have shared your experiences," said Wood, of the Central Texas group. "We offer that six times a year in Austin. And our speakers, which are the

icing on the cake, are really phenomenally good speakers."

Maryland retiree Precht prefers the soft sell. "There is intellectual challenge, fellowship and a decent, reasonably priced lunch," he said with a laugh. "And if you have too many glasses of wine, you can just doze off during the presentation." ■

*The author is a writer with State Magazine.*



FOCUS ON  
Self-Funded  
Staffers

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Sense of purpose  
motivates  
Franklin Fellows

*By Steve Bagley*

To the Franklin Fellows Program, James Carden is special. He's the 100th fellow in the program, which provides the Department with academicians and nongovernmental specialists at no cost for a year.

To coworkers relying on their twice-monthly paychecks, though, Carden is special in a different way: He works for the Bureau of European Affairs' Russia office on a gratis basis. Carden, a former Wall Street banker, is what the Franklin program calls "a self-funded candidate," and he's not the only one in the program's five-year history or even in the minority.

What motivates someone to volunteer for an entire year? Carden said he wanted to leave the private sector and move toward a public service career. He saw the Department as a good fit while in Moscow where, he said, he was "constantly in the position, at the school, with non-American friends and acquaintances, of defending or explaining why the United States was doing what it was doing."

Carden said he enjoyed his new role as a spokesman for America among his multinational friends and on his return to the United States applied right away to the Franklin Fellows Program. "The chance to work at State outweighed any economic considerations," he said.

Of the 100 fellows, 66 have like Carden worked for the Department as no-pay volunteers. The remainder were underwritten by the corporate, academic or nongovernmental organizations that employed them, and typically hold their jobs for them until they return. Forty of the current program's 48 fellows are self-sponsored, including Dr. Randall Doyle, otherwise a professor of modern Chinese history at Central Michigan University. Doyle, who joined the program in May, said he was inspired to apply following a meeting with Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell.



**Top:** Franklin Fellow Randall Doyle, right, meets with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (Photo by Jeffrey Martin/Washington Post Live). **Left:** Franklin Fellow Tom Miller answers questions about Middle East affairs as part of his role as Jordan Desk Officer (Kevin Casey). **Below:** Franklin Fellow Albana Karakushi, right, discusses coming changes to the Human Rights Reports with Caucasus Officer Wendy Silverman (Kevin Casey).



Doyle said he “simply could not pass up the opportunity to work in the Department of State and attend forums, symposiums, conferences and summits, especially on East Asia or China.

“It’s been a real eye-opener in many respects,” he added.

Another self-funded Franklin Fellow, Albana Karakushi of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, is a naturalized American citizen. She said her motivation to join the program came from her childhood in Albania. Each year, she said, her family received a book by the country’s socialist leader, Enver Hoxha.

“I remember our terror-stricken faces as we saw the entry page,” Karakushi recalled. “Hoxha’s face had been scribbled all over” and her family feared it might be considered guilty.

“The lack of freedoms as a child as well as the chaos of the first half of the ‘90s in Albania and the experience with human rights issues in the United States made me want to be part of the progress, however slow and at times excruciating as it might be,” she said.

Living without pay in Washington, D.C., is difficult, said Karakushi, a recent graduate of the United Nations University. However, she added that the program was another step in her education.

“Working in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor will help me understand what works and what does not and how one can affect change.”

Thomas Miller, the 77th fellow, who works in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs as Jordan desk officer, said living for a year without pay is a significant sacrifice but worth it.

“No one has a crystal ball, so it was impossible to predict what the economy would look like at the end of the fellowship,” he said. “But I believe investing in your development and following your goals will always pay off in the long run.”

The Franklin Fellows Program was conceived in 2006 by former U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Henrietta Fore as a counterpart to the Executive Council on Diplomacy Corporate Placement Program, which sends mid-career Foreign Service officers on detail assignments to participating corporations for a year. The Corporate Placement Program gives FSOs a fresh perspective on logistical and administrative operations, said Franklin Fellows Senior Advisor Bill Pope.

As for the Franklin Fellows, they are important “citizen diplomats,” Pope said, who make enormous contributions to Department. ■

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*The author is associate advisor to the Franklin Fellows Program.*

The crackle of gunfire in the dark is not the sound a Bureau of Diplomatic Security agent longs to hear, but during the past six months in Benghazi, Libya, it was all too common as exuberant fighters celebrated the day's revolutionary successes with rounds dispatched randomly into the night sky.

# MISSION TO A REVOLUTION

BY MARIO MONTOYA



مطلبنا  
الحرية

WE A DREAM



The story of how the agent got there began in February when the large catamaran ferry *Maria Dolores* eased into the rocky harbor at Valletta, Malta. Her passengers included American diplomats, who had hurriedly evacuated after conflict erupted in Libya and their safety and security could no longer be assured in Tripoli. Over the next two months, these same diplomats joined the international effort to support Libya's revolution and march toward democracy and freedom.

By early April, with Benghazi firmly in rebel hands, a dozen intrepid U.S. diplomats equipped with armored vehicles and communications gear set sail from the same port, passing Valletta's ancient harbor fortress and cruising into the blue Mediterranean beyond the breakwater. The Libya of April was a dramatically changed place from the Libya of February.

"We arrived April 5th," recalled the expedition's leader Special Envoy Chris Stevens. "It was difficult to get there at the time. There weren't any flights. So we came in by a Greek cargo ship and unloaded our gear and our cars and set up our office there."

The team's mission was to establish a U.S. diplomatic outpost in Benghazi, the cradle of the revolution and a stronghold of the forces that were pressing to end the Qadhafi regime after the dictator's 41 years in power.

"My mandate was to go out and meet as many members of the leadership as I could in the Transitional National Council," said Stevens. "I've gone around with our small team and tried to get to know other people in the society there."

Stevens said the Libyans were genuinely grateful to the United States for supporting their aspirations for freedom, as demonstrated by the greeting the team received. The Libyans had hoisted British, French, Qatari and American flags at Freedom Square, the vast open area in front of the Benghazi courthouse.

But the group's members needed more than a warm welcome; they needed a place to bed down for the night. In expeditionary diplomacy, the key is to make do with what you have, so the mission's first night was spent aboard ship while Diplomatic Security

Service agents Brian Haggerty, Kent Anderson, Josh Vincent, Chris Deedy, James Mcanelly, Jason Bierly and Ken Davis, Agent in Charge Keith Carter and Political Officer Nathan Tek scoured the city for rooms. They soon settled into a formerly government-owned hotel where other foreign missions and international journalists were lodged, but had to move when a car bomb exploded in the hotel parking lot.

Special Envoy Stevens and Political Officer Tek spent their days and nights building up the U.S. government's first on-the-ground contacts with the Transitional National Council, as well as with members of the emerging civil society and newly freed news media. Their reports back to Washington equipped senior officials with the information needed to develop effective U.S. policy regarding the TNC.

Stevens and Tek met with TNC leaders from a wide variety of backgrounds—former Qadhafi-era officials who had defected, academics, lawyers, doctors, military officers and volunteer fighters—who were united in a desire to overthrow Qadhafi.

They also facilitated the delivery of non-lethal military assistance to the TNC for the protection of civilians and civilian-populated areas and launched the U.S. government's cooperative program with the council to collect dangerous weapons such as shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles.

The U.S. Agency for International Development, meanwhile, oversaw the distribution of nearly \$24 million in humanitarian assistance. Erica Kaster and Camara Garrett continue to implement \$5 million in assistance from the Office of Transition Initiatives, intended to strengthen Libya's new civil society, independent media and interim governing authorities.

The early liberation of Benghazi and eastern Libya unleashed an array of nongovernmental organizations to pursue issues ranging from human rights and humanitarian aid to political party development. The number of independent publications mushroomed to more than 20 in the east alone. Opposition radio and television stations also sprouted.

Diplomatic advances were accomplished against a background of quiet success in overcoming some extraordinary operational barriers. Normal management and communications were rendered especially difficult for the U.S. team because Qadhafi loyalists had sabotaged the country's telephone and Internet systems, limiting contact both among Libyans and between Libya and the rest of the world. Information Resource Management Officer Bill Mincks worked tirelessly to maintain the e-mail and phone connections between the expedition and Washington.

Special Envoy Chris Stevens speaks with Tobruk Mayor Faraj Yasin as they tour the World War II memorial at Tobruk, site of a German defeat.





Special Envoy Chris Stevens, center, chats with a Libyan archaeologist at the ruins of the ancient Byzantine city of Cyrene in Sousa, Libya. RSO Mike Ranger is at far right. **Below:** DS Special Agent Joshua Vincent, right, tests satellite data and voice communications aboard a cargo vessel headed to Benghazi from Malta.





Rebel fighters and residents of Benghazi celebrate in the city's main square.



The author, right, offers pointers in marksmanship and weapons handling to four of the National Transitional Council's local guards at Benghazi. Below: Graffiti in Benghazi tells the world of Libya's freedom.

The team also made certain the unseen and sometimes underappreciated management tasks that make an outpost run—paying bills, buying provisions, negotiating leases with the landlords—were not sidetracked.

The challenges of establishing a new U.S. government office were compounded by the absence of international air service in Libya, scarcity of foreign currency and inability of local bankers to make and receive international transfers.

Despite being in the hands of friendly forces, Benghazi had tenuous security. Only two weeks before the team arrived, a threatened massacre of Benghazi's 750,000 residents was thwarted by NATO-led Operation Odyssey Dawn, the decisive air bombardment that routed Qadhafi's forces.

"We operated in eastern Libya, not the part that Qadhafi controlled," Special Envoy Stevens said. "The immediate concern when we got there was that Qadhafi's forces had almost infiltrated and taken over Benghazi, but were pushed out by NATO."

DS agents Jeremy Clarke, Chris Little and Mario Montoya, medic Jack Van Cleve, Regional Security Officer Mike Ranger and Security Protective Specialists Domingo Ruiz and Ronald Young protected mission staff traveling in Benghazi or in the rebel-controlled towns in eastern Libya. Once the mission moved to a private compound, DS agents and security engineering officers ensured safety with a blend of physical barriers, cameras and other technical means.

A local guard force was also assembled to provide early warning and a first line

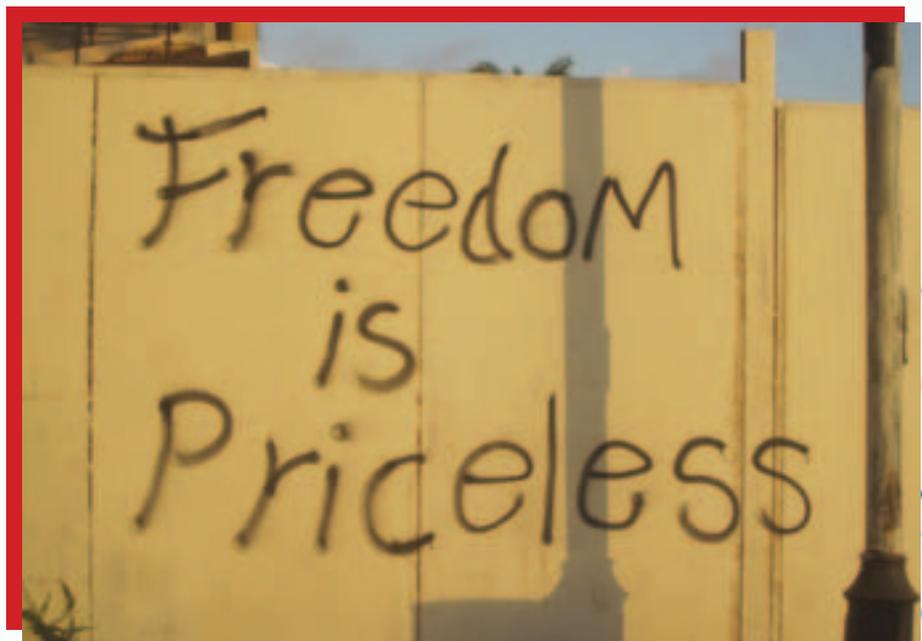
of defense. DS agents quickly established a training program that included internal defense planning, weapons safety, basic marksmanship and tactical combat casualty care, while DS medics handled everything from a dog bite to two medical evacuations.

Five months after the diplomats steamed out of Malta's Grand Harbour toward Benghazi, Tripoli fell suddenly and Libyans poured into Freedom Square, rejoicing that the revolution was near its end. Meanwhile, the Americans who had arrived in April were

already looking ahead to the moment when Libya would start rebuilding.

As the TNC looks to establish an interim government, the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli has resumed operations and taken over some of the work begun in Benghazi. The team in Benghazi is proud to have played a role in providing humanitarian support to the Libyan people and strengthening the Department's capability for expeditionary diplomacy. ■

*The author is a DS special agent.*





***Post of the Month***



Lake Bled with its breathtaking scenery is one of Slovenia's top tourist destinations (Photo by Christopher Wurst).

# Ljubljana

Fairytale setting belies  
real-world issues

*By Meaghan Monfort*



## Post of the Month

Travelers cannot help but love Slovenia. Roughly the size of New Jersey, the country offers mountains, vineyards, caves and a picturesque coastline. It also offers a model for other former communist states. Slovenia is the only former Yugoslav republic in the European Union. Unlike the other former republics, Slovenia seceded from Yugoslavia with relative ease and enjoys a high standard of living. With good infrastructure, a well-educated workforce and a strong commitment to democratic processes, Slovenia is the envy of its neighbors.

Despite the idyllic postcard-perfect landscapes and clean streets, Slovenia has in some ways become a victim of its own success. Its swift progress over the past two decades belies a host of unresolved issues that lurk beneath the surface.

Embassy Ljubljana presses for liberalization of the economy, international engagement as part of NATO and more balanced reporting in the media. But people-to-people engagement remains the mission's top priority and is required at all levels. A recently erected plaque in front of the chancery quotes Slovenia's best-known poet, France Prešeren: "By thoughts of brotherhood we are bound."

To bridge the gap between Slovenes and Americans, all embassy personnel must conduct public diplomacy, especially through youth outreach.

The flagship endeavor for 2011 is the volunteerism-focused Bob Dylan Project, which supports civil society in Slovenia. Fourteen popular Slovene music groups and 14 local nongovernmental organizations collabo-

## International Role

In late 2010, the first Slovene troops deployed to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, reinforcing the country's expanding role in international affairs. Public opinion, however, has been decidedly against their involvement in Afghanistan. Given the country's historical tradition of non-alignment, fundamental in the days of Yugoslavia, support for NATO in general is mixed, but the government remains steadfast thus far.

This non-alignment outlook complicates the mission's objective of encouraging greater international involvement. Moreover, Yugo-stalgia—a longing for how things used to be—seems ubiquitous and sets the work of this mission apart from others in former socialist European states.

Slovenia's regional engagement is more substantial. This northernmost region of the former Yugoslavia sits at the crossroads of Europe and the Balkans, and regards its place along this cultural, historic and geographic fault line seriously. The Slovenian Armed Forces are deployed in both Bosnia and Kosovo, and the United States and Slovenia coordinate closely on regional issues, especially integration of the Western Balkans into European institutions such as the EU and NATO.

Through its "Brdo Process" of dealing with regional issues, co-sponsored with Croatia,



Left: Embassy families help commemorate the 66th anniversary of the U.S. 10th Mountain Division ski race at Mt. Mangart (Photo by Christopher Wurst). Below: Slovene music star Zoran Predin rocks Ljubljana at the "Become a Volunteer, Project Bob Dylan" concert (Photo by Petra Cvelbar).



## Engaged Mission

The U.S. Embassy sits on a quiet street in Ljubljana, one of Europe's most charming and walkable capitals, with snow-capped mountains as a backdrop. Originally a painter's villa, the chancery was constructed in 1897 and became the embassy in 1999.

Embassy Ljubljana is a small but energetic and engaged mission comprised of approximately 30 American and 50 local employees. The U.S. Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps maintained a local presence until the 1990s, but now only the departments of State and Defense remain.

Though small, the mission has extensive goals in an environment for diplomacy that is surprisingly challenging. Most Slovene media are staunchly and reflexively anti-American, and the public is generally skeptical of U.S. policy objectives.

rated with the embassy on the project, which includes a CD, concert, documentary and film festival.

The country's small size makes it easy for embassy families to experience life outside the capital. The adventurous can head to Lake Bohinj in the morning, spend the day paragliding, swimming and hiking, and still be back in Ljubljana for a late dinner. Those looking for more relaxed outings find no shortage of vineyards to visit, towns to explore and cozy cafes to enjoy.

Slovenia has also fostered tentative steps toward wider reconciliation and cooperation. In April 2011, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder attended an event where Slovenia brought together, for the first time, all ministers of justice from the region, including Serbia and Kosovo.

The picturesque town of Piran is Slovenia's "jewel" on the Adriatic Sea (Photo by Christopher Wurst).





## ***Post of the Month***



Travelers to the Soča River Valley near Bovec encounter this narrow footbridge (Photo by Christopher Wurst).



Students at a school in Ormož greet visiting Public Affairs Officer Christopher Wurst in the uniforms of a team from the Slovenian American Football League (Photo by Breda Popovič).

## Slovene Identity

For hundreds of years, Slovenes lived under Hapsburg rule. Following the collapse of Austria-Hungary in 1918, Slovenia joined Yugoslavia. However, it was not until 1991 when Yugoslavia began to unravel that the Slovenes obtained a state of their own.

Given this history, the survival of the Slovene language and identity is impressive, and this fact is not lost on Slovenes today. Ljubljana has a monument to Napoleon, who citizens commemorate for declaring Slovene an official language in the Illyrian Provinces. Though most of the embassy's work takes place in English (Slovenes are excellent English speakers), mission personnel find that knowing a little Slovene goes a long way.

Following its break from Yugoslavia, Slovenia quickly set its sights on membership in NATO, the EU and the eurozone, and it understandably celebrates being the first former Yugoslav republic to reach these milestones. Democratic processes are well rooted, and

Slovenes enjoy a standard of living nearly as high as their EU counterparts.

These successes, however, have masked other problems. The state still dominates the economy, and the public procurement process remains far from transparent. The recent collapse of the coalition government is a symptom of post-communist growing pains, as parties quarrel over how and whether to reform social systems, introduce economic austerity measures and allow for more transparency.

Unfortunately, the country's insulation extends beyond its economy; xenophobia toward non-ethnic Slovenes persists. U.S. Ambassador Joseph Mussomeli recently visited a Roma settlement to draw attention to the abject poverty that persists in the community, and to highlight the stark contrast between their lives and those of the average Slovene. Although Slovenia is widely credited as a Roma success story, many Roma continue to live in deplorable conditions, with some communities even lacking access to clean water.

## Historical Reckoning

The fast track to Europe's democratic and capitalist institutions also left little time for historical reckoning and honest self-examination of World War II and its aftermath. Some intellectuals have quipped that Slovenia is the only country in Europe that still doesn't know whether it won or lost the war. Slovenes fought on both sides, and these divisions remain, especially among the elite.

Recent discoveries of mass graves in Slovenia dating from immediately after the war poignantly demonstrate the country's need to deal with its past. Ambassador Mussomeli recently led an embassy visit to one of these sites to shed light on the issue. Despite this effort, the graves, possibly the largest in Europe, continue to garner little public attention.

Twenty years after independence, Slovenia stands at a crossroads, and the next few years will be decisive. The current economic crisis has sharpened social and political divisions. While some leaders are urging more far-reaching reforms, others seek to reinforce entrenched statist economic policies and push Yugo-think—non-alignment—to once more dominate Slovene international relations. Slovenes must weigh their decision to confront their past against their desire for continued international development. ■

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

## At a Glance >>>

## Slovenia



**Capital:** Ljubljana

**Government type:** Parliamentary democracy

**Area:** 20,273 sq. km.

**Comparative area:** Slightly smaller than New Jersey

**Population:** 2.05 million

**Languages:** Slovenian, Serbo-Croatian, Italian and Hungarian

**GDP - per capita:** \$28,200

**Export commodities:** Manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment

**Export partners:** Germany, Italy, Austria, France and Croatia

**Import commodities:** Machinery, transport equipment and manufactured goods

**Import partners:** Germany, Italy, Austria, France and Croatia

**Currency (code):** Euros (EUR)

**Internet country code:** .si

Source: Country Background Notes



# Powerful Connection

Department reaches out to 1.6 billion Muslims

*Story and photos by Farah Pandith*

At first glance, Daniyal Noorani might not seem like someone with whom the State Department would engage. A soft-spoken U.S.-educated young Pakistani who now lives in Lahore, Noorani is a talented musician/ animator/filmmaker with no policy background or affiliation with a nongovernmental organization. He's not the type that usually catches the Department's diplomatic interest.

However, Noorani, and dozens of people like him, are integral to the work of the Office of the Special Representative to Muslim Communities. SRMC works closely with our embassy colleagues in every region to reach people like Noorani and listen, build dialogue and collaborate. Since

June 2009, SRMC has been on what some may consider an impossible mission: engaging 1.6 billion people using limited resources.

However, this is exactly what a small team of diplomats has done by focusing on the more than 60 percent of Muslims around the world under the age of 30, leveraging U.S. embassies and using new media to engage their audiences.

In the past two years, the Department has advanced President Obama's goal of creating new relationships with worldwide Muslim communities "based on mutual interest and mutual respect" and is engaging with a new generation using 21st-century tools and citizen diplomacy.



Heaven.” Through his interaction with SRMC, which initially took place entirely through social media, he extended the reach of his work and connected with other like-minded young change-makers worldwide.

The Department’s engagement, done alongside its embassy colleagues, is bearing fruit. The Department is having frank discussions with Muslims worldwide every day via regular webchats, addressing policy concerns with thousands of Facebook and Twitter followers and sharing the centuries-long history of Islam in the Americas, via the chronology we provide to embassies.

Issues of foreign policy and concern about the growing rise of extremism are regularly raised by grassroots communities, but so are opportunities for action. One of SRMC’s flagship projects, “Generation Change,” connects young American Muslim professionals to their counterparts abroad and asks them to jointly work on community-based projects.

The Department also hears directly from them about what matters. For instance, their concern about the growth of hate language around the world prompted a campaign launched by SRMC and Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism Hannah Rosenthal. The campaign, called 2011 Hours Against Hate, is promoted on

Facebook, keyword 2011hoursagainsthate. It has helped connect young people worldwide to volunteer opportunities and provide tens of thousands of hours of support on projects that bridge communities.

Everywhere we turn, we find Muslim youth who want to engage with the United States on global challenges, such as malaria, climate change and literacy. We must seize this moment to engage with a generation that wants to change the narrative of “us vs. them.” Ten years after 9/11, there is still work to be done in building new relationships, recalibrating opportunities and finding ways to build programs based on mutual interest and mutual respect. One of the Department’s greatest strengths is being the convener, facilitator and intellectual partner with young, talented and eager change-makers. The Department is harnessing new power, new ideas and new outcomes.

The United States must do this for Noorani’s generation and those that will follow.

More information about the Office of the Special Representative to Muslim Communities and Muslim engagement is available by contacting [SRMC\\_Staff@state.gov](mailto:SRMC_Staff@state.gov). ■

*The author is the special representative to Muslim communities.*

**Left:** Special Representative Farah Pandith, third from left, speaks with members of a youth group in Amman, Jordan. **Below:** From left Special Representative Farah Pandith, Ambassador Alan Solomont and Special Envoy Hannah Rosenthal meet in Cordoba, Spain, for the 2011 Hours Against Hate event.

Clearly, there is a “youthquake” afoot in terms of the energy of Muslim youth participating in the Arab Awakening. An entire generation is rejecting stereotypes and their autocratic rulers. They are engaging, online and offline, with the rest of the world and have high expectations for their future.

Whether they are getting the word out about community trash pickups or arts festivals, or pushing their governments and societies in new directions, these youth are spring-boarding onto the global stage with new strategies and ideas, offering the United States a unique opportunity for partnership.

Noorani represents a generation that has come of age in a post-9/11 world, struggling with a stereotype-ridden Muslim identity. Tired of sectarian violence and the growing influence of extremism, Noorani created a series of music videos that illustrate the dangers extremists pose to Pakistani youth, including a popular song and animated video called “Find



**Office of the Month**



★ ★ ★ WELCOME TO THE ★ ★ ★  
**VISA SURGE**  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Washington office helps meet international demand

Story by *Brian Campbell*



## Office of the Month

Consular sections are busy these days, due to a surge in applications for the nonimmigrant visas (NIV) needed for tourist and business travel to the United States, especially from major emerging economies. Since 2005, NIVs have risen 234 percent in Brazil, 124 percent in China, 51 percent in India and 24 percent in Mexico. In fiscal 2011, U.S. posts in China processed more than one million Chinese applications for U.S. visas, a 34 percent increase over 2010. This past June, consular officers and local staff from the NIV unit at the U.S. Consulate General in São Paulo, Brazil, shattered the world record for visa adjudications in a single day.

The 2,475 adjudications done in seven hours beat the unit's previous record of 2,351, set in November 2010.

This is good financial news since the United States posted \$103 billion in revenue (excluding passenger fares) on 60 million passenger arrivals in 2010, supporting 1.2 million jobs. According to the U.S. Travel Association, each international visitor spends an average of \$4,000 while in the United States.

The key Washington office facilitating visa issuance worldwide is the Office of Public and Diplomatic Liaison in the Bureau of Consular Affairs. The office, composed of the Public

Inquiries and Diplomatic Liaison divisions and a Web and Customer Services Unit, is the public's primary point of contact on visa matters. Its work also relieves overseas consular sections from performing such services as revalidating domestic diplomatic visas, assisting businesses through the Visa Business Center and answering hundreds of thousands of public inquiries. That leaves overseas consular staff free to do visa adjudication.

According to Office Director Gary Sheaffer, the office centralizes many customer service functions, allowing consular officers in the field to concentrate on facilitating legitimate travel and protecting America's borders.

"Most of our visa specialists have been with State for years," said Sheaffer. "Some have worked in consular sections overseas. [The staff's] combination of experience and access would be difficult to create anywhere else in the world, and gives our specialists a unique capacity to deal with complex questions and cases," he added.

Oliver Kinder, chief of the Diplomatic Liaison Division, and his staff issue and revalidate visas for diplomatic missions, international organizations, the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and foreign missions to the U.N. His office has four visa specialists, two visa assistants, a division chief and an office management specialist and adjudicates more than 30,000 visas each year. It also processes applications for change into and out of diplomatic status and coordinates with the Department of Homeland Security on extension and replacement of arrival/departure forms for the diplomatic community.

Kinder's division is a conduit among many different stakeholders, including geographic and functional desks, posts, the offices of Protocol and Foreign Missions, consulates, embassies and international organizations accredited to the United States, lawyers and members of Congress, and others.

"Any inquiry, no matter how slight the nexus to diplomatic visas, will likely find its way to our office," he said.

The division's Web site and customer service unit maintains up-to-date content for the visa-related portions of Consular Affairs' Web sites, [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) and the internal CAWeb, and provides content guidelines for other, post-specific visa Web sites. Karla Gentile, the division director, said her team is working to make the public Web site more customer-friendly so that visitors can quickly access the information they need.



**Top:** The Public Inquiries team of the Office of Public and Diplomatic Liaison discusses current issues at a staff meeting. **Left:** Berenice Mariscal is deputy chief of the Public Inquiries Division.

The Public Inquiries (PI) Division handles approximately one million telephone inquiries a year and thousands of written ones. According to Division Chief Stephen Ashby, PI provides an avenue for involved parties to express their concerns about and get the status of specific cases.

"Inquirers want information, but they also want to know that someone is willing to listen," said Ashby. "Given the increasing demand for visas, the work we do answering inquiries frees up time for posts to be able to conduct more interviews," added division deputy Berenice Mariscal.

Barbara Baden, the unit's team leader, was a consular officer for more than 19 years, and said it's difficult for consular officers at post to thoroughly explain their decisions to applicants and the public. Baden believes clarity is key because the visa process is one of the most direct points of contact between the U.S. government and the average foreign citizen.

"It's a good feeling when we can actually help untangle a visa matter,

whether or not the visa gets issued," Baden said of working in the division's Written Inquiries Unit. "If we can clarify the status of an applicant's case through an inquiry from a family member, an attorney or a member of Congress, we can shed some light on what appears to be a rather opaque process."

The unit is often involved in cases of urgent travel, such as for medical emergencies. Those involved are often distraught because they don't think they'll be able to apply or travel on time.

"We are able to clear up many misconceptions and explain the process that embassies and consulates have for just such cases," said Visa Specialist Christopher McFadden.

The Business Visa Center and Conference Listing Service of the Public Inquiries Division provides U.S. businesses information about the application process for visas for business travel to the United States, such as when U.S. companies invite prospective clients to visit. It also provides visa information to U.S. conference and meeting organizers that expect a large number of foreign visitors. The center handled more than 3,000 inquiries from American businesses in 2010, and "it looks like we are going to do a lot more than that this year because of the huge demand from China and Brazil," said center Director Stephanie Anderson.

Ann Vigilant, who manages congressional inquiries, said her work involves educating

congressional staffers on visa issues and expeditiously answering their questions in order to reduce a post's workload.

"For many callers, we are often one of the first interactions they will have with an American, and our goal should be to make that interaction a positive one, no matter what the outcome of their call or inquiry," said Raquel Caesar, the team leader for the Telephone Inquiries Unit.

One of the office's visa specialists, Vincent Wilson, teleworks from the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá. He responds to student and exchange-visitor visa inquiries worldwide from students, parents, school administrators and exchange program coordinators. He finds providing solid information to people and "educating the masses one e-mail at a time" to be satisfying work.

Recognizing the economic importance of the travel and tourism industry, the Office of Public and Diplomatic Liaison also coordinates closely with the departments of Commerce and Homeland Security, other government agencies and the private sector to welcome visitors to the United States. Its primary mission is to uphold border security while facilitating legitimate travel. ■

*The author is a special advisor in the Office of Public and Diplomatic Liaison.*

Members of the Public Inquiries unit gather after their weekly team meeting around a sign from their office that reflects U.S. diversity and the nation's welcome to visitors.



# BROAD REACH

Diversity, experience key to Toronto LE Staff's success

*By Eugenia Davis*

More than half of Toronto's approximately three million residents were born outside Canada, so perhaps it is not surprising that many of U.S. Consulate General in Toronto's Locally Employed Staff also came to Canada as immigrants. What is unusual, however, is that many of them also worked for the U.S. government in another U.S. embassy or consulate before being hired in Toronto. Twenty-one full-time and two peak-season employees, nearly half the LE Staff, have served at other posts. Altogether, consulate employees speak approximately 20 different first languages and 28 languages in all.



The consulate benefits greatly from its staff's international background and experience with other U.S. missions. Because Canadian citizens generally do not need visas to travel to the United States, the visa applicant pool in Toronto largely consists of third-country nationals living in Canada. During a typical year, the consulate receives nonimmigrant visa applications from more than 170 different nationalities, so the staff's collective cultural knowledge is invaluable.

For some of the LE Staff, working for the State Department is more than a job; it's a safe landing in a new home. In Tehran in 1979, the U.S. consul general's secretary, Farimah Voshgmir, was hoping to emigrate from Iran after the revolution but needed a place to settle and work. One day in September of that year, her American boss handed her a telegram from the U.S. Embassy in London offering her a job in response to an application she had submitted earlier.

"It was like a lifeline, a miracle," said Voshgmir. Just two weeks after she moved to London, the U.S. Embassy in Tehran was taken over by Iranian students, and for the next 444 days her former boss and American colleagues were held hostage."

Voshgmir worked in the London press office for three and a half years before moving to Consulate General Toronto, where she was hired as a cashier, became a secretary and is now a human resources assistant. In 2012, she will celebrate her 38th year with the Department. Another long-time Department employee, Senior LE Staff member Jane Boyd, also came to the consulate from another U.S. mission. She launched her career in 1965 at the Embassy in Kingston, Jamaica. After emigrating to Canada in 1977, she worked in the consulate's immigrant visa and consular information units before becoming supervisor of the unit specializing in treaty trader/treaty investor visas in 1995.

Nonimmigrant visa team leader Irina Bakhareva is another LE Staff member for whom the consulate has become a second home. Trained as an engineer, Bakhareva found it difficult to find an engineering job when her native Kazakhstan became independent in 1991. The U.S. Embassy in Almaty hired her to work as a telephone operator, then as a visa assistant. She emigrated to Canada and was hired at the consulate general in 2003.

"When I was unable to find work in my field as an engineer, the U.S. government gave the chance to start a new career," said Bakhareva.



**Above:** Holding the flags of the nations where they worked for the Department are many of the Consulate General Toronto employees who came there from other U.S. missions. **Below:** Local employees Irina Bakhareva (Almaty), Nazanin Vafadari (Dubai), Viktoriya Burnasheva (Tashkent) and Katie Latos (London) stand with the flags of their former posts at the consulate's entrance (Photos courtesy of U.S. Consulate General in Toronto).



Not all the consulate's local staff came from as far away as Kazakhstan or Iran. Fil McKaye, a switchboard operator and mailroom clerk, worked for the U.S. Consulate General in Montreal for 15 years before moving to Toronto. In Montreal, she had been an immigrant visa clerk and backup cashier, and served as the consul general's secretary during a staffing gap.

"Working at the U.S. Consulates in Toronto and Montreal has given me broad experience and an enjoyable career," said McKaye.

Other local staff members have experience at U.S. missions in such diverse places as Dhaka, Cairo, Hong Kong, Manila, Mexico City and Yerevan. Perhaps more than any other U.S. post, Toronto's LE Staff reflect the truly global nature of the Department's workforce. Their international backgrounds and experience have been invaluable in dealing with such a broadly diverse pool of visa applicants. ■

*The author is a consular officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Toronto.*

# Holy Orders

Retired FSO leads rural Episcopal congregation  
By *The Rev. Paul J. Andersen*

As a retired Foreign Service officer and Episcopal parish priest, I am often asked, “So, did you enter the ministry after the Foreign Service?” Although that may seem a reasonable assumption, I confess I encountered few FSOs who became religious converts while in the Foreign Service. However, I also encountered many FSOs who were already people of faith and who saw their faith as a blessing that enriched their years of service and brought a special dynamic of integrity and humanity to their careers.

I was already headed for the priesthood when I altered course to join the Department of State, first as a Civil Service employee in 1979 and then as a Foreign Service officer in 1982. I envisioned my State career as a hiatus between my “diaconate year” at a parish in Washington, D.C., and my ordination to priesthood. I was ordained overseas in 1983, but then went on to spend 21 exciting and rewarding years with State.

During my first overseas assignment, to Belize in 1983, I focused my free time on community projects at the cathedral in Belize City. At mid-tour, I was ordained by the Anglican bishop of Belize, although the tradition then was that only indigenous Belizean clergy were ordained locally. I visited remote missions with the bishop and served as an adjunct chaplain for Belize’s Defence Force Air Wing, two unique interaction opportunities.

From Belize, my ministry followed my Foreign Service assignments. At every post, I used my spare time to minister to local, often international, Anglican congregations wherever they met—a Lutheran church in Zagreb, Croatia; a Catholic church in Belgrade, Yugoslavia; the historic Afghan Church (Church of India) in Bombay; Anglican churches in Sierra Leone; the Anglican Cathedral in Malta; and the Catholic Cathedral in Skopje.

At each post, my church activities provided unique opportunities to interact with the local community and strengthened me in tough situations. In Belgrade, my special commitment to humanity helped me as I participated in the rescue of a kidnapped U.S. citizen child. In Sierra Leone, my faith helped me remain confident when I was held overnight by rebel forces while assisting with a U.S. citizen case. In Malta, my faith helped me gain access to a church-influenced culture, and in Macedonia it helped me develop a close relationship with key religious leaders caught in Balkan religious and political strife.

Foreign Service colleagues and supervisors rarely had anything negative to say about my faith-related work, but I felt few truly understood it or saw any benefit to my FSO career. However, my ministry did regularly place me in a close working relationship with local religious leaders, including imams, bishops, patriarchs and rabbis. Considering the complexities of today’s religious community, those sorts of contacts can be, shall we say, a godsend.

Even in my era, when few FSOs were admired for their commitment to faith, these contacts often gave me insights into my work as a consular officer and an appreciation for local culture. They also enriched my life.

In 1999, after completing a Pearson assignment as deputy chief-of-staff for Congressman James McGovern, I was at a crossroads. I needed to care for an aging mother who had Alzheimer’s disease and two newly adopted sons, ages 9 and 4, whom we had adopted at the end of our assignment in Macedonia and who spoke only Macedonian. So, I opted for early retirement and returned home to teach prep school briefly in Massachusetts.

When my mother died, I felt myself called back into full-time ministry—I had come full circle. My Foreign Service career had armed me with a world vision far different than many clergy who live and minister in only one area or state, exposed me to a range of cultures and nations and kindled in me a genuine desire to make a difference, not just make a living. It also exposed me to expressions of faith and deep commitments to faith seldom seem stateside.

I look back with great appreciation on my Foreign Service career and believe my call to the ministry helped make me a better FSO and consular officer. My Foreign Service experiences, in turn, have made me a better minister and priest.

Today, I am rector of Christ Church Parish (Episcopal) in Christchurch, Va., a rural parish that dates from 1666, although our present church was built in 1712. Among the notable figures buried in our cemetery is General Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller, the revered and most decorated U.S. Marine. I daily play host to numerous Marines who come to pay homage.



My ministry brings me into the lives of a congregation of more than 100 members drawn from many parts of the country and professions. I’m often blessed to be able to draw on my Foreign Service experiences in my sermons. A favorite sermon centers on a trip I made with the embassy boat to Placentia in southern Belize to conduct a worship service and visit with local leaders. Returning, we ran out of gas in the dark. I began to pray, and then there was a beam of light and a voice called out, “Are you OK?” We yelled back, “We’re lost and without gas!” Suddenly numerous spotlights came on. We had drifted into the harbor of Belize City. We could have gotten out and walked to shore!

I use this anecdote with the themes “I once was lost, but now am found,” and “sometimes even when we’re sure we’re lost, God is watching over us.” ■

Rev. Andersen pets a parishioner’s dog after a service.



# Giving Season

Department's CFC effort hits its stride

Story and Photo by Ed Warner

In uncertain economic times, charitable giving through the Combined Federal Campaign takes on even more importance. The CFC's impact on lives was highlighted at the Department's launch of its 2011 fund drive in October when Gale Smith, a member of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's public affairs staff, told attendees of how CFC charities helped her family after her son was diagnosed with leukemia at age 3.

Smith said her son had an 85 percent chance of survival, largely due to the advances made possible by CFC-financed research. Furthermore, the CFC-supported charity Make-a-Wish Foundation gave her family a much-needed vacation while her son was in treatment, and the CFC-supported Four Diamonds Fund at the Hershey (Pa.) Medical Center paid the roughly \$40,000 in medical expenses not covered by her family's health insurance, Smith said.

"We'd always been givers [to CFC], but we never thought we'd be in need," she said.

Now 24, her son is chief executive of a nonprofit organization and someday hopes to work for Make-a-Wish Foundation, she said.

## 4,000+ Organizations

Make-a-Wish Foundation of America and its regional chapters are among the more than 4,000 organizations to which CFC donors may designate their pledges. These organizations, listed in the CFC's online catalog (<http://www.cfcna.org>) include local ones such as the Alliance for the Physically Disabled, a Northern Virginia group that helps with affordable housing; national groups such as the Conservation and Service Corps, which supports environmental community service; and international organizations such as the sustainable development group Lift Up Africa. Last year, the National Capitol Area CFC contributions raised \$67 million, of which \$32.9 million went to local groups, \$25.8 million to national ones and \$5.5 million to international ones. Of last year's total, the Department raised more than \$2 million. This year, it's aiming to raise at least \$2.2 million. In addition to meeting its financial target, the Department is focusing on expanding its participation rate. Last year, 14 percent of employees participated.

"We'll achieve this goal only with your help and hard work," said Director General Nancy Powell.

## Donate Online

Employees can donate via <https://www.employeeexpress.gov>, the preferred method, or by completing a CFC pledge form on the organization's Web site, or from CFC volunteer "keyworkers" in many Department offices. Donors designate one or more of the CFC nonprofit organizations by code number in the catalog and can give in a lump sum or, more commonly, make donations through equal 2012 payroll withdrawals.

According to CFCNCA, a \$50 biweekly deduction could provide support services and affordable housing for a year to a victim of domestic violence, and a \$100 deduction could help four elderly Washington, D.C., residents receive a year's worth of comprehensive



Kira Vuille-Kowing stretches at the end of HR/ER's Fun Run. The event attracted more than 300 participants and raised \$2532 for the CFC.

therapeutic and support services.

Employees can see the progress of the Department's fund drive at <http://cfcdashboard.state.gov/>, which breaks down total giving on a bureau-by-bureau and per-capita basis. Last year, several bureaus had particularly high per-capita levels, including African Affairs (\$468), East Asian and Pacific Affairs (\$592) and Population, Refugees and Migration (\$436).

During the Department's campaign, which closes Dec. 15, bureaus and offices will hold special fundraisers for CFC's general fund, which underwrites organizations CFC chooses. The Bureau of Consular Affairs, for instance, will reprise the cupcake taste-off that raised more than \$600 in the 2010 campaign, and the Bureau of Human Resources Office Employee Relations again held its fun run. The bureaus of Administration and of Overseas Buildings Operations, meanwhile, planned, respectively, a sale of books, DVDs and CDs, and a fall carnival.

Some CFC members particularly target D.C.-area needs. For instance, Daughter for the Day Inc. (CFC code 20494) provides personal helpers to the elderly, and the Rude Ranch Animal Rescue animal shelter of Annapolis, Md., houses animals until they find a loving home. One shy cat stayed 10 years, said Katherine Evans, president of the group (CFC code 45379). The volunteers from Daughter for the Day, meanwhile, help 1,400 Washington, D.C., area residents age 70 and up by getting their groceries or accompanying them on errands, such as doctor's visits, said Christine Murray, president of the group's board. ■

*The author is deputy editor of State Magazine.*

# Music Prodigies Steal the Show

By John Bentel

The Foreign Affairs Recreation Association and State of the Arts Cultural Series recently featured eclectic performances by talented piano prodigies and a concert violinist, and the music of Central Asia and Brazil.

Piano prodigies ranging in ages from 7 to 14 delighted a State Department audience in July. Alan Mao played a challenging selection, including *Waltz Scherzo no. 7* by Dmitri Shostakovich and *Little Monkey* by Chia Chen Chou. Lisa Li offered *Rondo on Argentine Folk Songs* by Alberto Ginastera and *Here Comes the Circus* by Li-Ly Chang, sponsor of the yearly International Young Artists' Piano Competition. Tina Jian, also a viola player, offered a sensitively rendered *Scherzo in B flat, op. 20* by Frederic Chopin. Ludwig van Beethoven's *Sonata in C Minor, op. 13 (1st)* was delightfully rendered by Ruobing Zhang, and Juncheng Sun played Sergei Prokofiev's challenging *Sonata in B flat, no. 8, op. 83 (3rd)*.

Concert violinist Rafael Javadov performed a rousing concert of contemporary musical selections in August. He received his bachelor's degree in Ukraine and his master's in Russia, and has performed numerous recitals as a soloist and with various chamber ensembles. The audience showered Javadov with resounding applause.

Also in August, ethnomusicologist and historian Adam Grode presented a program entitled "A Musical Journey in Central Asia," a concert-lecture that featured *Kashgar Rawap* and *Kazakh Dombra*, songs offered to promote understanding of the region's rich culture and musical heritage. The audience had an opportunity to try out some of the musical instruments.

In September, the jazz duo of guitarist Roberto Tyson and flautist Arch Thompson played music from Brazil. Tyson, an accomplished guitarist, composer/arranger

and performer, says he enjoys playing in a duo or as a soloist. Through the influence of his father, he said he came to infuse the traditional sounds and cadence of the Caribbean into his interpretation and arrangement of classical standards, producing his own unique jazz. Thompson's eclectic style fuses elements from classical music with R&B, Latin music and traditional jazz. His scat-singing, improvisational skills and fondness for composition helped him create an original jazzy style. The audience thoroughly enjoyed this dynamic duo.

The State of the Arts held its 6th Annual Talent Show Sept. 28. Barbara Pollard led off with a rousing gospel selection, and returning artist Cynthia Andrews provided a satisfying vocal selection. Gail Duncan

delighted the audience with an Irish reading, vocalist Ben Perry sang and poet Paul Hopper had the audience laughing with his short, humorous poems. Guitarist Charles Rowe and his "Fruitcakes" kept the laughs going with a light-hearted original song that continued the laughs, and Wanda Johnson played the piano and delighted the audience with a song. Chinni Dragon offered a colorful Bollywood dance, and the Recovering Angels' gospel selection captured the audience's heart. The show also featured the INR Ensemble playing wind instruments and Steve Black and Jackie Newton providing interpretations of modern-day performers. ■

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*The author is director of information resources in the Executive Secretariat.*





# *Don't Drink for Stress Relief*

*By Lorie J. Morris*

Managing stress is an everyday activity. You may already do things that help reduce the effects of stress, such as taking regular breaks or talking things out with a colleague. During the holiday season, it's especially important to be aware of stress and minimize its effects by, for example, eating a balanced diet and getting enough sleep.

Many of us don't get enough sleep, but small changes can help, such as going to bed at the same time each night and reducing light in the bedroom. Eating high-calorie foods, exercising hard or watching TV shortly before bedtime may contribute to poor sleep.

A soothing ritual before bedtime, such as a tepid bath or breathing meditation, can reduce stress, shorten the time needed to fall asleep and improve the quality of sleep. A gentle stretching routine, visualization of a pleasant experience or soft music may also lead to better sleep. Watching TV or eating in bed, on the other hand, reinforces the association between being awake and in bed. Associating being in bed with sleep or sexual activity can reduce the time spent falling asleep.

Some people turn to alcohol to manage stress or get to sleep. While this may be effective in the short term, it can lead to health or behavioral problems in the long run, such as alcohol dependency. Warning signs of a problem with alcohol include failure to fulfill work or family obligations, taking risks and increased conflict with family members or work colleagues. Involvement with the legal system—for example, driving or fighting while intoxicated—is a clear sign of an alcohol problem, as is drinking during the day in order to function.

As with stress management, the first step in dealing with an alcohol

problem is awareness. Research tells us that a man who consumes more than four drinks per occasion or more than 14 per week has an increased risk of medical or behavioral problems. The same is true for women who consume more than three drinks per occasion or seven in a week. If you often exceed these limits or are concerned about your intake, talk to your medical provider and decide together what your maximum intake should be based on your health, age, medications and other factors.

When someone expresses concern about how much you drink, it may be a sign of being in denial about a serious problem if you focus on why the person is wrong or feel anger that he would bring up the subject. It's never easy to hear that kind of message, but it may be a signal that you need to reduce your alcohol intake and think seriously about your relationship with alcohol. If you decide to limit your intake, stay on track by talking to your medical provider and asking for support from family and friends.

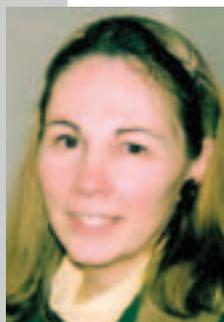
If you find that you cannot stay within your limits, a confidential consultation with the Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program staff is in order. Unless you need immediate assistance, information about you is completely confidential and will not be disclosed without your written consent. For more information about ADAP or to make an appointment, contact Willie Samuel at (202) 663-1904 or [samuelpw@state.gov](mailto:samuelpw@state.gov). ■

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*The author is the director of the Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program in the Office of Medical Services.*



**Robert G. Adam**, 87, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Sept. 14 at his home in Washington, D.C. He served in the Navy during World War II before joining the Department. His postings included Paris, Belgrade, Saigon, Lagos, the Caribbean, Rabat and Casablanca. Later, he worked as an economist for the Federal Maritime Commission and traveled internationally. He loved seeing new places and learning languages and customs.



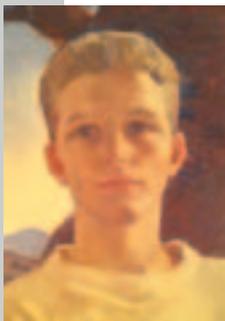
**Kathleen Marie Bishop**, 64, wife of retired Foreign Service officer James K. Bishop, died Sept. 29 of brain cancer at their home in Washington, D.C. She supported her husband and served the American communities during his tours as ambassador to Niger, Liberia and Somalia. A mechanical engineer by training, she had a passion for art. She was a quilter, water colorist and glass artist, and taught art to children, both professionally and as a volunteer for an organization assisting young girls at risk.



**Teresa L. Armentrout**, 49, a Civil Service employee, died Oct. 20 after a sudden illness. She joined the Department in 1984. She was a special assistant to the deputy assistant secretary for logistics management in the Bureau of Administration. Previously, she served in the then-bureaus of Personnel and European and Canadian Affairs. She enjoyed traveling worldwide, playing piano, reading and following West Virginia University sports.



**Eleanor Beatrice Coerr**, 88, widow of Foreign Service officer Wymberly Coerr, former ambassador to Ecuador and Uruguay, died Nov. 22, 2010, in Princeton, N.J. She also lived in Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines and Mexico. She wrote several dozen children's books and taught children's literature and creative writing at the college level. She established the first free public library for children in Quito.



**Stephen P. "Pat" Belcher**, 95, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 26 at his home in Washington, D.C. He served in the Army during World War II. He joined the U.S. Information Agency in Cairo as a film and publications officer in 1952. Later postings included Lagos, Cotonou, Paris and Dar es Salaam. After retiring in 1972, he worked for the Museum of African Art, the Smithsonian Institution and the Arts America division of USIA. He was active in local politics and civic affairs, and enjoyed woodblock printing, jigsaw puzzles and gardening.



**Philo L. Dibble**, 60, a retired Foreign Service officer who returned to the Department last year to become a deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, died Oct. 1 of a heart attack at his home in McLean, Va. His postings included Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon and Italy. An Iran expert, he played a key role in the recent release of two U.S. hikers from an Iranian prison. He volunteered with a youth swimming organization. His widow, Elizabeth Dibble, is also a Foreign Service officer.



**Henrietta L. "Hank" Eastman**, 90, a retired Civil Service employee with the U.S. Information Agency, died June 18 of a heart attack. She lived in Wheaton, Md. She worked at the Pentagon during World War II and with several federal agencies before joining USIA in 1962. She was a personnel management specialist when she retired in 1980. She was an active member and officer in the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association.



**William R. Leonard**, 94, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Oct. 16 at his home in Colorado Springs, Colo. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps before World War II and retired from the Air Force in 1962. He joined the Department in 1966 and served in Vientiane, Laos, and Washington, D.C., with USAID. He retired to Colorado Springs in 1976. He enjoyed golf, the outdoors and summers at his lake cabin in northern Minnesota.



**Charles "Chuck" Green**, 93, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Sept. 8 at his home in Malibu, Calif. He served in the Navy during World War II and joined the U.S. Information Agency in Colombia in 1962. Later, he served with the USAID in the Dominican Republic, Peru, Vietnam, Colombia and Indonesia. He retired in 1982. He was active in political and community organizations and taught current events classes.



**Monica Joan Schmitt**, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 2, 2010, in Pompano Beach, Fla. She served with the Army in Japan after World War II and then with the Army Corps of Engineers before joining the Department. Her postings included Japan, French Morocco, Bolivia, Iran, Rhodesia, Thailand, Germany, the Soviet Union, Fiji, Laos and China. She retired to Jensen Beach, Florida, then moved to Fort Lauderdale and finally Pompano Beach in 2004.



**Northrop Hardy Kirk**, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Aug. 21. He lived in Pacific Grove, Calif. He served in the Navy during World War II before joining the Department. His postings included Belgrade, Sri Lanka, Guinea, Baghdad, Geneva and Paris. After retiring to Pacific Grove in 1975, he worked at the Alliance on Aging, drove for Meals on Wheels and was active in Kiwanis. He was always willing to extend a helping hand.

## In the Event of a Death...

Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960. For specific questions on submitting an obituary to *State Magazine*, please contact Bill Palmer at palmerwr2@state.gov or (202) 203-7114.

# Retirements

## Foreign Service

Bagley, Gertrude S.  
 Banks, Robert  
 Barron, Frederike A.  
 Bean, Diane R.  
 Beaudry, John J.  
 Becker, David Cortelyou  
 Benesch, Anthony  
 Bennett, Randall D.  
 Bezner, Mark Jeffrey  
 Boehme, Robert W.  
 Brakel, Willem H.  
 Burt-Lynn, Jane  
 Byergo, Laura C.  
 Callahan, Robert J.  
 Chiplis, William V.  
 Christy, Gene Burl  
 Clarke, Robert John  
 Cobb, Joyce B.  
 Colton, Elizabeth Overton  
 Conaway, Mary S.  
 Coronado, Jesse I.  
 Crowley, Shirley J.  
 Dorschner, Jon Peter  
 Eisenhauer, Peter  
 Finnegan Jr., John J.  
 Flynn, Christopher F.  
 Foster, Harold David  
 Fuller, Carol S.  
 Gerg, Timothy John  
 Glass, George A.  
 Glynn, Catherine M.  
 Glynn, James J.  
 Gray, James B.  
 Gurney, Charles B.  
 Haas, Dean J.  
 Hartsock, Linda K.  
 Henderson, Joel G.  
 Hermanson, Arthur John  
 Hernandez, Pericles Medalla  
 Hodges, Heather M.  
 Jenks, Darrell Allan  
 Jordan III, W. William

Kahele, Karl Jonathan  
 Kaminski, Michele L.  
 Kane, Ramona Rae  
 Karaman, Yaseen S.  
 Kelly, Helen B.  
 Kemp, Edward A.  
 Kiene, Robert R.  
 Kurzbauer, Ruth A.  
 Macapinlac, Leticia P.  
 Mangum, Jacqueline C.  
 Martin, Michael B.  
 Martinson, Jon L.  
 Maxwell III, William A.  
 McDonald, Jackson C.  
 McGee, James D.  
 McKay, Maryann  
 McKeon, Edward  
 Meserve, W. Michael  
 Michael, A. William  
 Milliken, Scott H.  
 Monsour, Annette M.  
 Moore, Daniel K.  
 Moriarty, James F.  
 Moser, William A.  
 Nelson, David D.  
 Noble, David Adelbert  
 Page, Susan  
 Pelland, Steven D.  
 Phillips, Gregory Eugenio  
 Price Ascroft, Lois A.  
 Quast, Necia Leanne  
 Robinson, Charlene Lamb  
 Rohrllich, Paul E.  
 Rorvig, Richard Arthur  
 Silver, Charles N.  
 Thompson-Jones, Mary A.  
 Tilghman Jr., Joseph F.  
 Tillery, James David  
 Warren, Bruce W.  
 Wehrli, Edward J.  
 Williams, Timothy Scott  
 Yates, Mary Carlin

## Civil Service

Beshears, Phillip L.  
 Carter, Juliette  
 Coffey, Marguerite R.  
 Cohen, Susan L.  
 Collins, Joseph A.  
 Corey, Brenda A.  
 Crowley, Anne H.  
 Cruciani, Renee M.  
 Falsetto, Stephen E.  
 Fogel, Miyuki  
 Garcia, Leyda M.

Greig, Barbara J.  
 Henderson, Timothy E.  
 Holleran, John William  
 Jackson, Patricia Ann  
 Johnson, Carolyn Y.  
 Poindexter, Willie Donald  
 Regan, Alice  
 Rudd, Cheryl L.  
 Thornton, Sandra L.  
 Wimberly, Shirley

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