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MAGAZINE

Career Counselors

CDOs advise and mentor
Foreign Service colleagues

Strides for Lives

Embassy team fundraises
for children with cancer

Parks to Planets

U.S. Embassy Santiago promotes science in Chile





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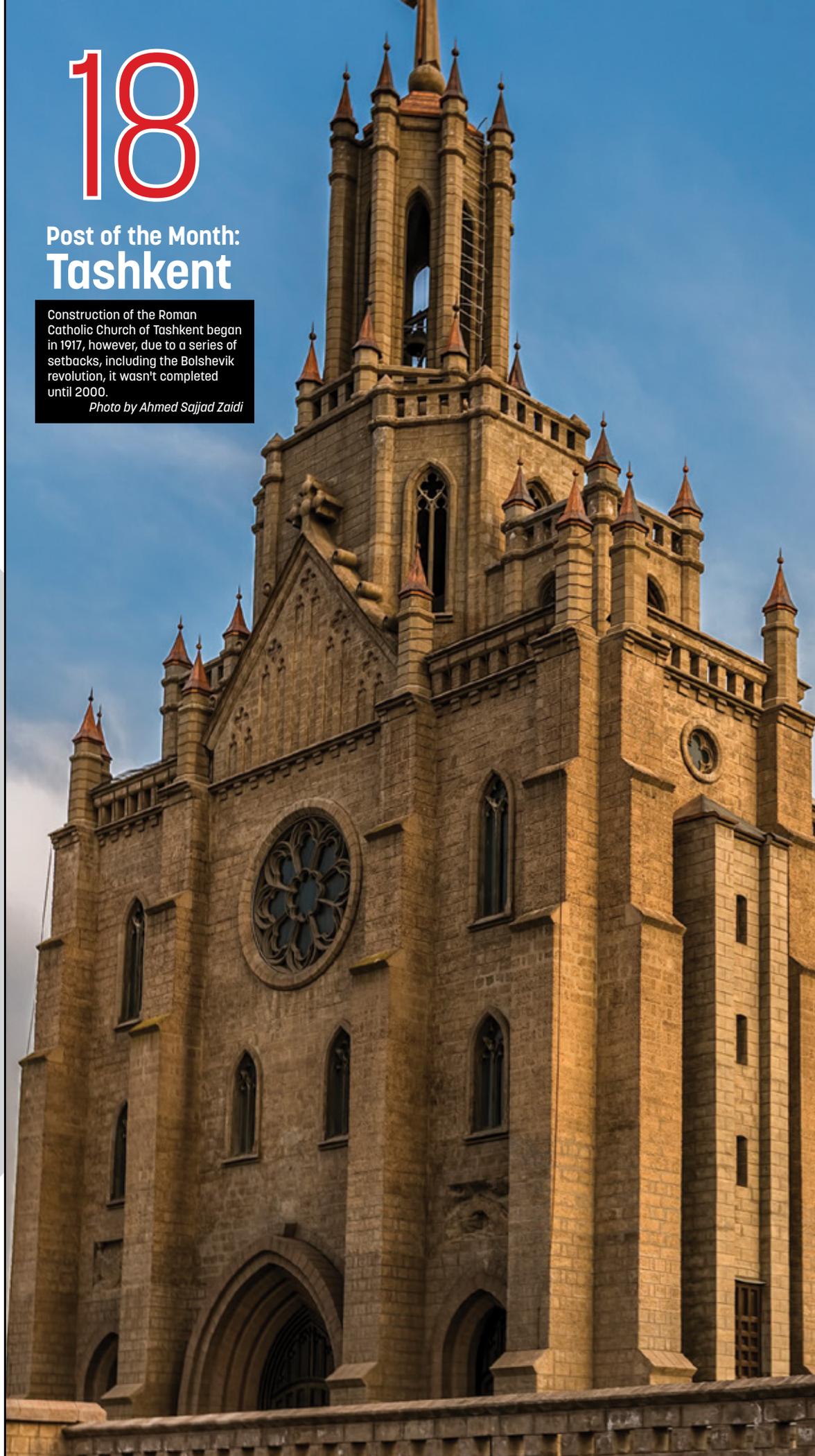
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Post of the Month: Tashkent

Construction of the Roman Catholic Church of Tashkent began in 1917, however, due to a series of setbacks, including the Bolshevik revolution, it wasn't completed until 2000.

Photo by Ahmed Sajjad Zaidi



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Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Joseph Swarford

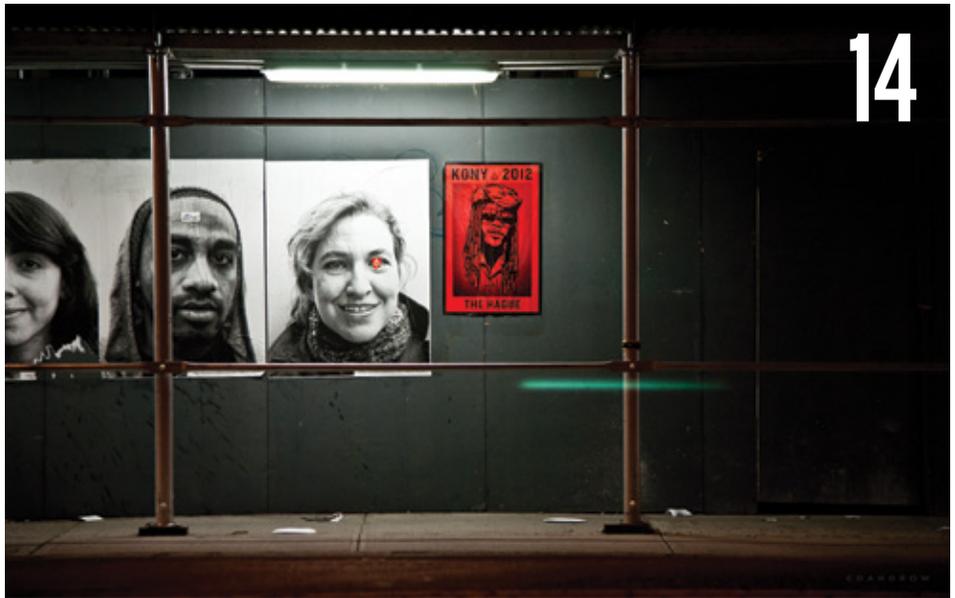


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Photo by Christopher Danarow



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On The Cover

The Cordillera del Paine mountain group is the centerpiece of Torres del Paine National Park in the Patagonia region of southern Chile.

Photo by Claudio Sepúlveda Geoffroy

Photo by Rishi Bhandopadhyay



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Post Addresses Gender-Based Violence

To help the host nation reduce gender-based violence, a critical problem in Tajikistan, the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe has undertaken numerous activities. In the latest, Ambassador Susan M. Elliott in December hosted a seminar to discuss that U.S. goal and the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence campaign.

In Tajikistan, the tolerance of economic, physical and sexual abuse is high. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation reports 62 percent of Tajik families experience domestic violence. Because of limited employment opportunities at home, men often migrate to Russia, leaving women financially, physically and emotionally vulnerable. They tend to remain in their marriages rather than prosecute abusive husbands and/or seek divorce.

Eliminating gender-based violence is a long-term challenge because women's fear of becoming destitute keeps them from taking action against abusive spouses, and cultural norms may weaken women's bargaining positions within their extended family and hinder their economic and educational opportunities.

Thus, the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe's strategy to address gender-based violence focuses on such social and economic empowerment mechanisms as increasing women's awareness of their rights, enhancing law enforcement's ability to investigate allegations and enforce domestic violence law, and supporting victims of domestic violence. The International Narcotics and Law Enforcement unit works with local authorities to mentor police agencies' leaders, to help them support domestic violence investigations, and to help communities and police jointly identify the causes of violence. Grants from the Office of Public Affairs create awareness of and access to legal



A Tajik woman displays a certificate from a course on land rights that sought to decrease women's financial vulnerability and make them safer from gender violence. *USAID photo*

services, telephone help lines, and seminars on economic and social rights.

The post's Feed the Future initiative targets factors contributing to labor migration, helping women start microenterprises and gain access to land and other resources, and provides business advice and support services. Empowering women positively influences government to take action against abusive men while challenging the cultural constraints facing women and hindering their economic and educational opportunities. ■

Outreach Features Artist Jeff Koons

The public affairs section (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm has paired two youth-oriented suburban Stockholm arts groups with American artist Jeff Koons to promote tolerance among youth. The Botkyrka Art Center, and its talented young immigrant artists, worked with a similar organization in another ethnically diverse suburb of Stockholm in the collaboration, aimed at reaching marginalized youth via art.

With PAS input, including a small grant to the two arts organizations, the Acceptance, Respect and Tolerance (ART) project began. PAS helped the groups reach out to the nearly 150 different ethnicities in the two suburbs and allowed young unknown artists to showcase their talents.

Since Koons, a long time collaborator with the Department's Office of Art in Embassies, was in Stockholm to promote an exhibition, his participation in the ART project was a boon. Ambassador Mark Brzezinski hosted a reception with the two community arts organizations, who discussed their aims directly with Koons. Both groups exhibited paintings and murals depicting the project's themes. The event allowed young up-and-coming artists to interact with established curators and Swedish VIPs.

Koons offered advice to the youths, mixing with them in a warm manner and telling of the challenges he faced as a young, unknown artist. He said it's important to persevere. The students wore ART T-shirts they had designed, presenting a handful to Ambassador Brzezinski and Koons.



Young artists take selfies with Jeff Koons, center left, and Ambassador Mark Brzezinski, center right in tie. *Photo by Keith Sousa*

The evening featured an interactive art project where the ambassador made the first mark on a blank canvas and, encouraging guests to take part, then passed the pen to Koons, who added the next stroke on what is a continuing, collaborative work symbolizing the inclusiveness of the ART project.

The two organizations also took guests' comments on the theme and are working on them to complete the project. They recently gave the embassy six framed posters depicting the young artists' interpretation of the comments, and gave copies to Koons when he returned for the Nobel Prize celebrations. They will present the project's final phase when they complete the canvas the ambassador and Koons began. ■

Initiatives Revitalize Consular Section

Last year, the U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah earned new officer and Locally Employed Staff positions to address burgeoning visa demand, and used the One Consular Affairs (ICA) toolkit to help cope with workspace shortages, increased nonimmigrant visa (NIV) requests and the challenges of American citizen services. ICA is the Bureau of Consular Affairs' initiative to promote successful leadership and management practices, including taking into account people, customers, finances and processes equally and simultaneously.

In Jeddah, the consular section brainstormed and found areas for improvement. New projects focused on reducing wait times and improving the customer experience. The NIV team critiqued the intake and adjudication process for applicants and eventually transferred from a fully seated waiting system to one with some seating and a more efficient line for applicants. This trimmed overall wait time to only 30 minutes and improved customer satisfaction. Another effort aimed to ensure applicants were prepared for their interview. The section increased local outreach electronically and physically, getting consular officers to meet with university administrators, students and local travel offices to debunk visa myths. Some initiatives were post-specific and some done in conjunction with mission-wide consular efforts, fostering new, long-distance working relationships among the three consular sections in Saudi Arabia.



Consular staff enjoy the new wall art in Jeddah's Consular Section.

Photo by Kaweem Koshan

Jeddah also stressed the interactive aspects of its business model and created opportunities within daily routines for staff to unwind, socialize and bond. For instance, it added icebreaker activities to weekly team meetings, so that old and new staff could continually learn from and about each other. For post-wide camaraderie, the section hosted breakfasts with staff from other sections to share a peek into the consular world and identify opportunities for collaboration. These efforts boosted the team's and post's collegiality and integration.

And, to make the section's revitalization clear to all, Consular Assistant Omniya Noureldin painted the office walls, transforming the facility into one with color and diversity, reflecting the spirit of change and winning compliments from applicants and visitors. ■

FLO Survey Finds Satisfaction

The recent survey on client services for employees and family members by the Family Liaison Office (FLO) gained more than 2,500 respondents, more than half of them employees from State and other foreign affairs agencies. The first FLO survey of employees and their families serving under Chief of Mission authority was done in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Resource Management and Organization Analysis.

The survey, summarized on FLO's website, gauged satisfaction with FLO programs and services and shed light on the needs and priorities of the community FLO serves. FLO will use the results in developing advocacy, programs and services, and as a baseline for measuring performance over time.

The survey rated FLO's services highly. More than half of respondents assessed FLO's main program areas as excellent or good. These include family member employment, crisis management, support for unaccompanied tours, and education and youth services.

FLO said the survey showed its services match what employees and their families consider important when bidding on assignments: education and youth services, family member employment and crisis management. A majority of respondents ranked FLO's family member employment services as the most important, with the open-ended responses focusing on this issue and related challenges of maintaining a career and finding work overseas.



The survey also found nearly 40 percent of respondents are unaware of FLO's website, which houses more than 90 percent of its resource information.

"We were gratified to find FLO's services rated highly, but our main goal was to listen and to learn how we can serve our community better," said FLO Director Susan Frost. FLO has used the feedback to develop its programs and services, she added.

A new FLO Global Webinar series connects the community with information on employment, training and other resources. The Expanded Professional Associates Program (EPAP) now offers two open seasons each year. FLO has also revamped its web resources and increased outreach efforts. Additional initiatives addressing needs identified by the survey are planned as a continual process of client-centered improvement. ■



Volunteers from post are all smiles as they pose with children at the Sor Dominga Bocca shelter.

Photo by Christian Verdaguer

Grant Aids Girls' Home in Guayaquil

Volunteers from the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil in December made their final improvements to a local home that provides housing and rehabilitation to 22 abused and mistreated girls, ages 5 to 21. With the volunteers' help and a \$2,800 grant from the J. Kirby Simon Foreign Service Trust, the girls of the Sor Dominga Bocca shelter now have a multipurpose room where they can learn.

Before work began, Consul General Tricia Fietz said she first met with the home's staff and residents, finding the girls excited to have a say in which books and games would be purchased and learning from staff that the home also needed basic life/safety supplies, such as fire extinguishers. The consulate itself funded some of the necessary upgrades to maintain the home's registration to operate.

The 15 volunteers who worked on the final project came from all sections at post and included locally employed Staff members, U.S. direct hires and family members. They cleaned the room, hung curtains, assembled furniture and installed computers and a TV. They also gave the girls backpacks with supplies and provided books, arts and crafts, and games for general use. Once the room was completed, volunteers enjoyed reading and playing with the girls.

One volunteer, Dolores Craig, who wrote the grant proposal and oversaw the project, said, "This was one of the most rewarding days that I have had in Guayaquil." She said the activity enriched the girls' lives and those of volunteers. The consulate staff will remain in contact with the home. ■

Attendees Text Questions at Town Hall

In December, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security (T) Rose Gottemoeller and the Assistant Secretaries for the T Bureaus, Tom Countryman, Puneet Talwar and Frank Rose, hosted a Town Hall meeting in the Harry S Truman Building to address the T family's accomplishments of 2014 and introduce a new strategic workforce planning initiative for the three bureaus. Gottemoeller wanted those attending to be able to submit questions via texting, and the Executive Director for the T Bureaus, Sonna Stampono, made that happen.

Stampono said the bureau sought to improve communication and create an atmosphere in which employees feel free to communicate with leadership. She enlisted support of the Special Projects team of the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN) Technology Division to deploy Poll Everywhere, a web-based, real-time, anonymous polling system. Questions and comments were collected from those who texted them during the event and were sent to the moderator, who forwarded appropriate ones to Stampono, to voice publicly.

Thus, the more than 400 employees in attendance could text their questions and comments. Questions covered such topics such as Alan Gross' recent release from a Cuban prison and inquiries about plans for



Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller addresses the audience at the Loy Henderson Conference Room.

Photo by Robert Stewart

training experts in arms control. There was high audience participation, although, due to time limitations, not every question was answered. The questions were, however, archived and subsequently answered by the appropriate offices.

The head of the Special Projects team, Antonio Antiochia, said the systems "was flawless. Everyone across the board, including the AV team, front office/executive director, IRM tech team and the moderators, were committed to the success of this experiment." ■

FSI Offers Course on Interagency Environment

To enhance employees' effectiveness in implementing a "whole of government" approach on issues, FSI—in conjunction with counterparts from other government agencies—is offering "Understanding the Interagency" for mid-level professionals throughout the U.S. government. This week-long seminar improves interagency collaboration and communication in an interactive, discussion-based format, providing skills in navigating other agencies' cultures, collaborating across agency lines and contributing to national security policy.

The course includes interactive exercises designed to tap into students' knowledge. Senior-level speakers from across the spectrum of agencies give short presentations on interagency collaboration and their lessons learned. The objective is to challenge how students view other agencies, other federal employees, their own agencies and themselves. It offers in-depth discussion of the National Security Strategy and the National Security Council structure, and provides the perspectives of major players in the national security realm and how to interact with them.

Students also examine how agencies collaborate in the interagency system, using case studies and panel discussions on real-time events. Previous sessions have highlighted the U.S. response to the Haitian earthquake, Arab Spring and trade agreement negotiations.

Students also explore leadership within an interagency environment versus leadership within a single agency and examine their experience working with



Negotiating an interagency agreement in PT-331 are from left George Siasoco and Kate Legates, both of USAID, Beth Hanley of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, a Department of Defense employee, Bureau of Consular Affairs staffer Kim Wright-King and Lilly Wahl-Tuco of the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo.

Photo by Alice Oliveira Soens

the interagency to more effectively lead through persuasion and influence.

The course is targeted to GS-12/13 and FS-03 employees who have worked in the federal government for fewer than 10 years and preferably have had some interagency experience. It is offered in April, June and July, and is modeled on the senior-level National Security Executive Leadership Seminar.

To apply for the course, Department employees should submit a one-paragraph justification to PLD-FSI@state.gov that describes the applicant's background, including any prior or expected exposure to the interagency environment. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, and sessions fill quickly. ■

Direct from the D.G.

ARNOLD CHACON,
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE



Our Evolving Approach to Workforce Management

Secretary Kerry has said, “Global leadership is a strategic imperative for America.” Therefore, it is our responsibility to do all that we can to ensure the success of the men and women who carry out our foreign policy.

To implement the secretary’s vision, we must promote a culture of accountable leadership that enhances employee development and satisfaction at all levels of the Civil and Foreign Service. Key to that effort is identifying and fostering future leaders and managers.

The Bureau of Human Resources (HR) is at the forefront of that effort, part and parcel of the FSI-M/PRI initiative on a Culture of Leadership. That initiative looks to align recruitment, training, assignments, performance evaluation and communications into an integrated whole, as we shape the Department for the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. The secretary’s Leadership and Management Principles are both a guide and an impetus as we collaborate to do just that.

I take enormous pride in the skill, grit, sacrifice and commitment of our men and women. I’m also proud of the fact that the Department of State ranked among the top three in the Large Federal Agencies category in the Partnership for Public Service’s Best Places to Work in the Federal Government ranking, but we can and must keep getting better as an employer.

One way is to streamline and tighten our performance management system, both to return time and value to employees in the evaluation process and to determine to whom—based on merit—we should entrust greater responsibilities through promotion or other performance-based rewards.

Performance management is a term that at times sparks a negative reaction. Few like getting or giving a performance evaluation, because no matter what the input, it will not exactly match our self-image. We also shy away from difficult conversations. It’s easier to push to the side, compartmentalize or rotate out, but none of that solves the issue: building an employee’s professional development or strengthening the Department.

One of the prime responsibilities of a true leader is to foster a new generation of leaders. That involves integrity, accountability, mentoring employees, increasing productivity and ensuring the delivery of high-quality policy, programs and services. Our goal should be: Mission first, people always.

Performance management, in short, starts with leadership. It means doing the tough and necessary things to help employees succeed. This involves more than excelling at tasks, activities or output; it means achieving goals, results and outcomes.

This requires engaging in two-way conversations that help employees enhance their strengths. It also, in some cases, means having that hard conversation—and documenting it—to say an employee’s performance must significantly improve and offering constructive suggestions. It involves clear, candid and credible advice, support and decisiveness—taking tough action when necessary. In the end, it is all about empowerment, accountability and integrity.

In HR, we are looking to improve our performance management system for the Civil Service, Foreign Service, Locally Employed Staff and all other members of the State Department team. I would like to see us build the workforce we need for 2025 and beyond. This is a continual process for individuals and the Department. In coming weeks and months, we will share additional thoughts on substantially improving our performance management systems. ■

Arnold A. Chacon



All Diversity is Local

Congressman Tip O’Neill served with distinction as Speaker of the House during the Carter and Reagan years. A product of Boston’s ward politics, O’Neil on more than one occasion remarked, “All politics is local.” And he was right. The first commandment of elections is “Thou shalt win the ground game,” e.g., personal outreach, voter contact and above all, GOTV—getting out the vote.

In promoting the importance of diversity and inclusion, the president, our secretary and their surrogates can issue eloquently crafted pronouncements and policy statements, but they will have little effect unless supervisors, managers and senior leadership visibly embrace and champion the principles of equity, fairness and inclusion and then demonstrate the behavior in observable ways. “All diversity is local”—this is the message from the Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR).

We in S/OCR often have a hand in drafting the aforementioned statements, and we’re good at making a case for diversity. But, employees know when a leader simply repeats the day’s talking points and when, by contrast, those words authentically represent the mind and heart of their speaker.

Leaders can help truly advance diversity and inclusion by being willing to speak to these issues in their own voice and from their own experiences. Each year, S/OCR sponsors an annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration, where senior leaders are asked to do just that. During this event, leaders take the time to explain why diversity matters to them. Many share personal stories recounting events in their personal or professional lives that for them have helped to crystalize the importance of diversity and inclusion, while others share mistakes or lessons in leadership they’ve learned along the way. Each leader speaks for five to eight minutes with few or no notes. This speech, we advise, has to be from the heart.

This year’s event was held on Jan. 14 and featured remarks from Director General Arnold Chacon, Executive Secretary Joseph Macmanus, Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins and Director of Overseas Buildings Operations Lydia Muniz.

The yearly Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event continues to produce profound and inspirational results, but here is the paradox. Senior leaders did not move up the ranks to their lofty positions by publicly or loudly proclaiming their personal values. Most often posture for federal leadership success by holding one’s political cards close to the chest, being risk averse and speaking so as never to offend...anyone...ever. But it turns out that effective diversity management requires periodic personal, credible leadership expressions that support the values we all say in private we believe in.

Here are some additional practical leadership suggestions to help demonstrate one’s commitment to diversity and inclusion:

- Publish your own annual statement on diversity and inclusion. Make it in your own voice and mention your personal experiences. Consult S/OCR staff for advice on crafting your statement.
- Conduct periodic focus groups with a diverse subset of your staff. Host a coffee hour or brown bag lunch to ask about their experiences and listen to their suggestions.
- Organize a town hall meeting for your bureau or office to facilitate transparency and provide employees with a forum for open dialogue.
- Support the Department’s commemorative month celebrations and Employee Affinity Groups activities. Your personal involvement and presence at such events means a lot. Visit the S/OCR website <http://socr.state.gov/> for a list of coming events.

What other practical leadership tools have worked for you in promoting diversity and inclusion in your teams, offices or bureaus? Please share your ideas, experiences and suggestions with us at diversity@state.gov. Remember—all diversity is local. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive.





AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

Cherry trees lining Washington D.C.'s tidal basin attract visitors from around the world each spring during peak bloom.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



Investment Affairs

Data-driven policy making yields results

By Jo Chitlik, investment policy specialist and Franklin Fellow, Office of Investment Affairs

The Office of Investment Affairs (OIA) within the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB) makes it easier for international investment to support economic growth, development and



At the World Investment Forum in Geneva, OIA Deputy Director Ann Low and UNCTAD Coordinator of the Business Facilitation Program Frank Grozel brainstorm a marketing plan for the new Global Enterprise Registration site.

Photo by Bitia Mortazavi

job creation, both domestically and abroad. American investments abroad generate jobs, spur economic growth, share American values and create new markets for exports. Foreign investments in the U.S. increase American asset values and infuse domestic industries with innovations.

The office, led by Deputy Assistant Secretary Michael Tracton, works within the Department and in collaboration with the interagency community to urge foreign governments toward policy improvements that create enabling environments for international investment. OIA negotiates U.S. investment treaties jointly with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, advocates for the improvement of investment climates worldwide and encourages foreign investment in the United States. In 2013-14,

faced with a staffing shortage while wanting to do more to reinvigorate the world's economies, OIA applied a systems approach to its workstreams, embraced temporary and virtual staffing options and pursued data-driven policy making.

As a starting point, OIA identified its two annual flagship investment reports, Investment Climate Statements (ICS) and the 527 Report on Investment Disputes and Expropriation Claims, as vehicles for reform with far reaching impact. These reports are produced by U.S. embassies worldwide with expert input from within the Department, interagency colleagues and the private sector. The ICS identify policy, legal, regulatory and institutional barriers that hinder investment, and their analyses help U.S. firms make informed investment decisions. The 527 Report is an annual report to Congress



Taking a break during an OIA visit are representatives of some offices with which OIA collaborates. They include from left Caron DeMars, director of the Global Entrepreneur Program; Ann Low, OIA deputy director; Robert Farr of EB's Executive Office; Randy Fleitman, deputy director of the Office of Intellectual Property Enforcement; and Michael Fraser of EB's Office of Monetary Affairs.

Photo by Ed Warner



Office Director Michael Tracton briefs Jo Chitlik on an OIA report.

Photo by Ed Warner



Foreign Service officer Kristina Leszczak handles the office's WHA Portfolio.
Photo by Jo Chitlik

that lists every country in which a United States person is known to have a current and outstanding expropriation claim. Expropriation claims arise when a host government takes away or limits the use of private property, without proper or adequate compensation.

Both reports had been produced in largely the same formats for more than a decade. To revise the ICS format, OIA utilized virtual interns working online remotely from their universities. The revision boosted the statements' relevance and readability. The office standardized processes and created hyperlinks for resources, reducing the margin of error and saving staff time. OIA then partnered public affairs colleagues and with a handful of embassies to pilot-test the new process. The result was a process and template that yielded, for the first time, ICSes that were fully comparable across countries and topics, and included points of contact at posts, answered questions and were Internet accessible. Likewise, the compiling of data in a more user friendly manner will facilitate its long-term use as a tool for policy reform.

OIA engaged the Diplomacy Lab, a pilot program in which bureaus submit projects for possible execution by participating American

universities and faculty members, to undertake a research project on "Expanding the Policy Influence of the ICS," so the thousands of hours embassies spent producing the Statements could have the maximum positive impact. College of William & Mary professor Bradley Parks had just completed the "Making Reform Incentives Work for Developing Countries" research project, which consisted of a large-scale survey involving more than 6,750 policymakers and practitioners. His team chose OIA's project and his students used this research to produce 60 pages of analyses and recommendations, which OIA is using for targeted marketing and to continue improving the ICS.

OIA partnered with the Economic Bureau's executive office to build a SharePoint site for the 527 Report, creating a one-stop shop for production of the report. The site has the needed tools and a guide that takes officers through the steps to make their posts' submissions, without having to gain auxiliary documents such as emails or cables. This offers work flexibility, knowledge sharing and uninterrupted continuity to the regional portfolios.

The 527 SharePoint site's database allows OIA to more efficiently gather and share

historical claim information with the Legal Office of International Claims and Investment Disputes. As a result, U.S. embassies closed more investment disputes in 2014 than in any prior year.

Many embassies reported in their ICSes that complex business registration processes in their host nations inhibited investment and contributed to informality and corruption. OIA, therefore, worked with the United Nation's Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), alerting U.S. embassies to business registration websites UNCTAD had installed in 26 countries. Then, OIA conceived of having one Global Enterprise Registration platform with links to all business registration sites worldwide as a way to help publicize and promote simple business registration processes. OIA partnered with EB/CBA, UNCTAD and Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) to create the site, which each saw as a way to exponentially increase the impact of its organization's own work. The site was launched by EB's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Kurt Tong, at last year's Leaders' Summit of the World Investment Forum in Geneva. ■



\$216 Million Initiative

Mission supports opportunities for women

By Elizabeth Frankenfield, assistant information officer, U.S. Embassy in Kabul

As the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan draws down, Embassy Kabul is working with Afghan partner organizations to solidify the nation's gains on women's rights, healthcare, rule of law and security. To that end, the mission in November launched the U.S. government's largest gender program in the world, the Promoting Gender Equity in National Priority Programs.

The \$216 million Promote effort represents a joint U.S.-Afghan commitment to create opportunities for Afghan women to become future leaders. Since U.S. assistance to Afghanistan began after the fall of the Taliban in 2002, Afghan women and girls have made significant gains. Over the next five years, the Promote program is expected to help Afghan women expand these achievements.

Mission Afghanistan kicked off the Promote program with a series of events that culminated in an embassy celebration of the progress women have made in Afghanistan. The event featured a live video message from President Barack Obama and a speech by Afghanistan's

first lady to the more than 200 guests. In the words of President Obama, "together we can help women and girls across Afghanistan develop their talents, raise their voices, and strengthen their communities and their country." There was also a musical ensemble and live graffiti painting. The event also publicized the bilateral cooperation between the United States and Afghanistan and informed potential beneficiaries and key stakeholders on how to connect with the program.

International press and almost every major Afghan news outlet reported on the launch event. USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, who attended the launch, was interviewed by CNN from Kabul, and USAID Senior Gender Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Susan Markham was featured on Afghan television. The launch's panel discussion with prominent Afghan female leaders was attended by over 20 international and Afghan media outlets and broadcast live.

The post promoted the event with a media package featuring pre briefings with USAID officials, press releases, photos and videos,

Renowned Afghan graffiti artist Shamsia Hasani strikes a pose reflected in her new work at Embassy Kabul.

Photo by Joanne Lewa

and interviews with press representatives. In the days leading up to and during the event, the public affairs section used Twitter and Facebook to share information about Promote. In the social media campaign, influential users such as former first lady Laura Bush and USAID's Shah helped the hashtag #HerAfghanistan appear on the Twitter feeds of an estimated 1,298,409 users. Similarly, #PromoteWomen appeared on the Twitter feeds of an estimated 2,339,202 users.

On the embassy's Facebook page, within three days of the launch event, the embassy's posts on Promote generated a cumulative 4,645 likes, comments and shares. The Bureau of International Information Programs has since sent a Promote social media toolkit to Department social media managers, helping the campaign circulate to parts of Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas.

In all, the launch event succeeded due to staff cooperation, integration of interagency social media platforms and a communications strategy that included local, international, traditional and social media. ■

Bridging the Gap

Fellows clarify science, gain policy knowledge

By Genya V. Dana, foreign affairs officer, Office of the Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State



Dr. Robert Axelrod, a Jefferson Science Fellow in S/SRA, receives the National Medal of Science from President Obama in November. Photo by National Science and Technology Medals Foundation

Helping the Department grasp the scientific challenges associated with cyber attacks or the hydraulic fracturing used in natural gas production are just some of the daily tasks of Jefferson Science Fellows. The Jefferson Science Fellows program, launched in 2003, brings tenured faculty from U.S. academic institutions in science, engineering and medicine to spend a year at the Department or USAID learning the foreign policy process and contributing their expertise.

The Office of the Science & Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State (E/STAS) manages the program in partnership with the National Academy of Sciences, and has placed with the Department and USAID more than 100 scientists, engineers and medical professionals in 40 different offices during the last 10 years. Their scientific and technical

background helps the Department analyze and craft evidence-based decisions and demonstrates how science, technology and innovation can support U.S. foreign policy goals.

The fellows also help bridge the gap between academia and policy. For example, Dr. Robert Axelrod, a fellow in the Office of the Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State (S/SRA), received in November the National Medal of Science (the nation's highest honor for scientists) from President Obama for his work on cooperation and managing conflict. Dr. Axelrod has taken a year off from teaching and research at the University of Michigan to help Ambassador David Thorne integrate economic and commercial issues more prominently into U.S. foreign policy.

Dr. Axelrod said he was attracted to the fellowship, and S/SRA, because he wanted to be involved in policymaking, applying some of the theories on conflict resolution he has made his career studying. He added that working to advance the secretary of state's Shared Prosperity Agenda gives him a new sense of the strategies to advance long-term issues in a deadline-driven environment and how stakeholders must be consulted when crafting U.S. positions.

After their year of service, the fellows remain available to offer advice to the Department and USAID. For example, Dr. Katherine Seley-Radtke, a 2006 fellow in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, continues integrating science into the Department's diplomatic efforts eight years later. She works with the U.S. Embassy in Moscow nearly every year for one to three

months, advising the embassy's Office of Environment, Science, Technology and Health on science-related issues in Russia.

The fellowships help recipients improve their own work. During her exchanges, Seley-Radtke has developed research collaborations with Russian scientists and has published 10 peer-reviewed papers in leading scientific journals with her Russian co-authors. She has also mentored two students from Moscow in her University of Maryland lab.

The fellows program also helps researchers and academicians better understand U.S. foreign policy priorities and processes. Fellows have returned to their schools to start new courses on international affairs and technology, advised students on ways to combine science with public service and developed new research partnerships and directions. For example, Dr. John Savage, a 2009 fellow in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, was motivated by his fellowship experiences to develop and teach a new course on cyber security and international relations at Brown University. The class has grown in attendance from around 20 students per class to more than 70 in 2014. Students have since gained jobs in cyber security and government.

The Jefferson Science Fellows program is available to all Department offices. Fellows' salaries are paid by their home institutions during their year in Washington, which runs from one August to the next.

More information is available from E/STAS at STAS-Mailbox@state.gov or 202-647-8725. ■



Members of the 2009 class of Jefferson Science Fellows meet with then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Department of State photo

Hunting Kony

Department pursues brutal fugitive

By Ben Beach, former communications advisor,
Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations

A

mong all the instability in Africa, a bit of good news is that a group that has been terrorizing central Africa for a quarter century is slowly being dismantled by a multinational team in which the State Department plays a vital role.

The group led by the notorious guerrilla fighter Joseph Kony, 53, is called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). He and his followers gained a reputation for brutality as they waged an armed rebellion seeking to remove the Ugandan government and rule the country on the basis of the Ten Commandments.

After a series of defeats by the Ugandan military, the LRA sought sanctuary over the border in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The group terrorized portions of both countries as well as nearby southern Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). The LRA is believed to have murdered, raped, kidnapped and maimed tens of thousands of men, women and children.



Marty Regan, center, takes a break while on patrol in the DRC with African Union soldiers. *State Department Photo*

"I often imagine the day that Kony is captured; I think all of us out here do," said Marty Regan of the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO). Based at the U.S. Embassy in Kampala, Uganda, Regan is the field representative for LRA issues, serving as what he calls the "connective tissue" between the

Department and its partners in a collective effort to deplete the LRA and capture Kony. The initiative involves State, USAID, U.S. Special Forces, African troops, the U.N., the African Union (AU) and nonprofits. The first such representative, Jason Lewis-Berry, arrived in 2011 when the U.S. military deployed as part of the operation. (Then, CSO was the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.)

Regan is the fifth such representative. Having been in the assignment for 10 months, his replacement is scheduled to arrive next month.

Michael Newbill has served as the economic and political affairs counselor at Embassy Kampala for three years and has seen the effectiveness of CSO's support of the U.S. effort to pursue Kony. "I am grateful to have someone who can recognize and capitalize on the innovations introduced by our military, and combine it with the necessary diplomatic management that is crucial in Kampala and Washington," he said.

The United States got involved in Uganda the late 1980s, when USAID started relief programs in traumatized communities. In November 2008 AFRICOM began providing the Ugandan government financial and logistical assistance for an offensive, and in 2010, at President Obama's direction and with strong bipartisan support in Congress, U.S. Special Forces arrived to assist the regional militaries pursuing the rebels.

Kony and his group have abducted an estimated 20,000 people, mostly children, and forced them to become soldiers, servants and

sex slaves. In 1996, the LRA raided a girls' school and herded scores of students off into the bush. Some died in captivity; others were later freed.

At the heart of the counter-LRA operation is an effort to encourage members to defect. Over helicopter-borne loudspeakers, in radio broadcasts—including a pop song sung in English and local languages—and through hundreds of thousands of air-dropped leaflets, the counter-LRA team has urged fighters to "come home" and advised defectors that they will not be harmed by the military. Since 2012 more than 250 LRA members have defected.

CSO's representatives were early proponents of the defections effort and have played an important role in making it effective. They help develop the messages and tackle a variety of issues that crop up. Last fall, for example, Regan worked with a number of the partners to resolve procedures for defectors picked up in a country that is not theirs by officers from yet another country. "This cleared up a misunderstanding, and coordination has improved," said Regan.

In January, after 26 years with the LRA, Brigadier Dominic Ongwen surrendered in the CAR. He had been abducted at the age of 14. Like Kony and four others in the LRA, Ongwen has been charged with crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court. "The embassy, U.S. Special Forces and the NGOs began focusing on him as a potential defector last summer," said Regan.

"I have met with a number of LRA defectors. When you meet them, you are almost taken aback by how 'normal' they appear," Regan said. "They appear to be humble, regular people. While you can sympathize with all of them who ended up in the LRA after being abducted at a young age, many of the defectors were long time fighters who murdered, mutilated and raped innocent people."

Now, the LRA is believed to have fewer than 150 fighters remaining, and since 2010 the number of people killed by LRA attacks has plunged by 75 percent, and abductions have been cut in half.

However, Regan pointed out that "the search is getting increasingly difficult because

there are fewer LRA members spread across a densely forested area the size of California.” CSO representatives spend some of their time with the patrols, and “you see firsthand how tough it is to track the LRA,” Regan observed. “You have to use a machete about every 15 to 20 feet to cut your way through the bush.”

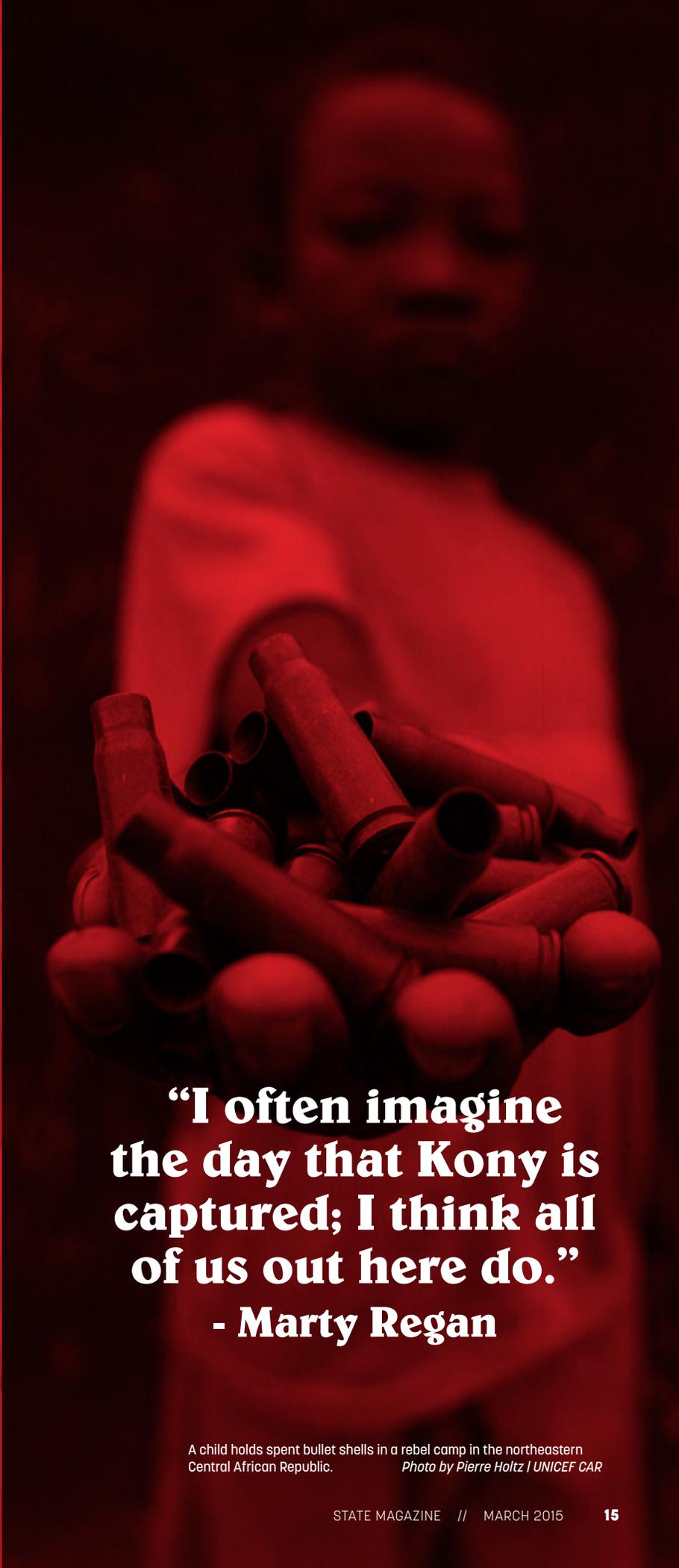
Meanwhile, USAID is working with Catholic Relief Services on a program that is helping villages in eastern CAR and the DRC develop community protection plans and reduce their vulnerability to LRA attacks. “I remember how surprised the residents of these remote villages were to see an American,” said Charlene Brown, who was CSO’s representative in November 2012.

Kony is thought to be in eastern CAR or in the disputed area between Sudan and South Sudan. As long as he remains at large, he retains a strong psychological grip over people in LRA-affected areas. Moreover, since there are ungoverned spaces in these countries, Kony could potentially rebuild the LRA.

In December, the Bureau of African Affairs and CSO co-chaired, with the EU, a meeting at the U.N. attended by U.S. civilian agencies, our military, and U.N., AU, NGO and donor nations’ representatives, to consider the next steps. Participants agreed to develop and maintain a more effective intelligence and operations cell to continue intelligence-gathering on the LRA. Also, since the LRA has started poaching elephants and other wildlife to fund its operations, the U.S. government is incorporating the work of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and African governments to limit that activity and perhaps capture LRA members.

“The teamwork in this mission is exceptional, and it is critical,” said Regan. “For example, you just couldn’t ask for better coordination between the military and civilian players.”

President Obama recently extended U.S. support for the fight against the LRA until October. “There are lots of scenarios for how this ends,” said Regan. “There could be a shoot-out, or Kony might just walk out and surrender, or ... fill in the blank. However it happens, it will be a great relief for the citizens of this area, those of us searching for him, and probably the remaining LRA members.” ■



“I often imagine the day that Kony is captured; I think all of us out here do.”
- Marty Regan

A child holds spent bullet shells in a rebel camp in the northeastern Central African Republic. Photo by Pierre Holtz | UNICEF CAR

Parks to Planets

Embassy promotes science in Chile

By Christopher M. Nyce, ESTH officer, and Andrew S. Chapman, economic officer, U.S. Embassy in Santiago



Ambassador Hammer, right, and his wife, Margrét Bjorgulfsdottir, left, listen as Eduardo Hardy, one of ALMA's lead managers, describes how the array of 66 antennas correlate signals to collect data from the distant reaches of outer space.

Photo by Christopher Nyce

Just as Yosemite National Park continues to awe visitors with its natural beauty, Torres del Paine, the premier national park of Chile, has a similar effect. These two parks, on opposite sides of the equator, have enough in common that the National Park Service and Chile's counterpart created a "sister park" agreement to share best practices in park management. As a result, Yosemite's park rangers have hosted visitors from the

Chilean Park Service and traveled to Chile themselves to assist with projects. These range from trail-building to advising on the creation of a youth conservation corps at Torres del Paine, which will help create a constituency for conservation and protected areas among the Chilean public. In early 2012, after uncontrolled forest fires burned significant portions of Torres del Paine National Park, Yosemite sent a Burned Area Emergency Response Team

to Chile to help the park develop a restoration plan for damaged areas.

Sister parks are just one way Mission Chile is promoting bilateral ties over scientific matters. Another example is in Chile's Atacama Desert, where dry climate, low light pollution and clear skies make it one of the world's best places for stargazing. The United States has a long history of involvement and investment in astronomy in Chile, now the

world's premier destination for astronomy research. Authorities estimate that within a decade, more than two-thirds of the world's astronomy infrastructure will be in Chile.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has supported astronomy in Chile since 1959 and invested over \$1 billion in equipment, infrastructure and operations, particularly in the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA) telescope, whose images are pushing the boundaries of human knowledge of the universe. Over the next decade, the NSF plans to invest yet another \$1 billion in the maintenance, operation and expansion of its telescopes in Chile. The embassy continually looks for ways to support these projects and further U.S.-Chilean scientific bonds, which strengthen the bilateral relationship.

The U.S. Embassy Santiago's Environment, Science, Technology, and Health (ESTH) team promotes U.S.-Chilean cooperation on scientific and environmental issues. ESTH





This panoramic view of the Chajnantor Plateau shows the site of the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), taken from near the peak of Cerro Chico. Completed in 2013, ALMA has a total of 66 such antennas in the array, operating together. ALMA is already revolutionizing how astronomers study the universe at millimeter and submillimeter wavelengths.
Photo by ESO/B. Tafreshi

issues have wide support at post, including that of Ambassador Mike Hammer, who since arrival last year has embarked on a series of trips throughout Chile to promote a wider scientific collaboration. He has visited Torres del Paine National Park, where park staff expressed appreciation for U.S. involvement; the ALMA observatory in the Atacama Desert; and even Antarctica, where NASA conducts its Operation IceBridge. Ambassador Hammer expressed his support for scientific cooperation in a speech at the University of Magallanes in Punta Arenas, where he spoke about the more than 160 years of the United States' "long and fruitful history of working with Chile on scientific endeavors of mutual benefit" going back to when U.S. Navy Lieutenant James Gilliss established an observatory in Chile in 1849.

When visiting Operation IceBridge in September, Ambassador Hammer joined NASA Chief Scientist Ellen Stofan on an

overflight of Antarctica. The annual overflights gather data on the ice sheet's volume and flow, data that aid the creation of detailed maps and models that improve understanding of glacier thinning and sea level rise. Mission Chile works to ensure the NASA project mission runs smoothly and is well received by Chile. Post also promotes speaking engagements involving scientists, students and NGOs, and even held a public Google Hangout event with the NASA scientists to increase awareness of NASA's activities and their impact on Chile.

The mission's ESTH projects are a priority because they benefit both nations and broaden understanding of the Earth and universe. Many U.S. technical agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, NASA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have the respect of America's foreign interlocutors and can engage in "geek-to-geek" exchanges that improve global understanding of technical issues and bolster institutional ties.

Scientific and environmental cooperation in Chile is part of the U.S.-Chile Basic Agreement Relating to Scientific and Technological Cooperation and the U.S.-Chile Environmental Cooperation Agreement. The latter has funded over 75 cooperative environmental projects since 2005 and provided \$4 million dollars in support since 2010. To coordinate all of this scientific collaboration, the mission periodically convenes a science committee.

The U.S.-Chile initiatives in park management, astronomy and Antarctic sciences are all high-profile examples of our broader scientific and environmental engagement, connecting our nations' people to address many of the world's most pressing issues and presenting an amazing opportunity for the post to showcase the United States in a positive and engaging way. ■



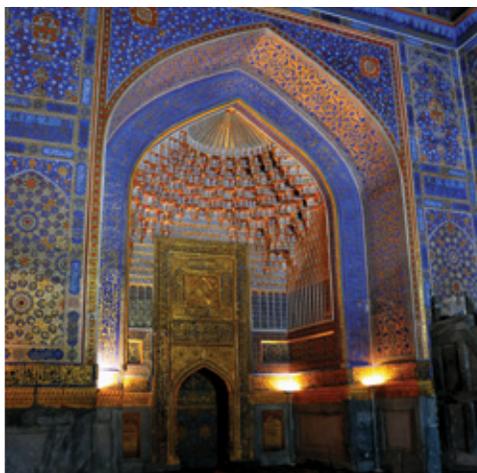
A view of Torres del Paine National Park in the Chilean Patagonia. This park has had a sister park relationship with Yosemite National Park since 2007.
Photo by Claudia Sepúlveda Geoffroy



UZBEKISTAN

Ancient Land of Tamerlane Again At Crossroads

By Natella Svistunova, information officer, U.S. Embassy in Tashkent



From top, left to right: Photos by Stefan_fotos; Jose Javier Martin Espartosa; Embassy Taskent; Kvitlauk; Vilskogen; Jose Javier Martin Espartosa; Sergei Golyshev; Jose Javier Martin Espartosa; Stefan_fotos.



Telyashayakh Mosque (Khast Imam Mosque) is home to the Samarkand Kufic Quran, the oldest Quran in the world. The 8th Century manuscript is believed to have belonged to the third caliph, Uthman ibn Affan. *Photo by Jose Javier Martin Espartosa*

Uzbekistan is the most populous country in the heart of Central Asia. Known for its sun-soaked countryside, vibrant fabrics, rich cuisine and the ancient Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva, Uzbekistan is grappling with the challenges of modernization while maintaining stability. Nearly 900 years ago, Genghis Khan and his Mongol army rampaged through the land that now comprises Uzbekistan. By the 14th century, Tamerlane, Central Asia's conqueror glorified by the Uzbek state, established a far-reaching Muslim empire, transforming Samarkand into a global cultural capital.

Russian incursions into Uzbekistan began in mid-19th century. The aura of the Silk Road waned as Imperial Russia strengthened its grip. Total Soviet control came in the 1930s with the imposition of collectivization and mass repressions. Moscow turned Uzbekistan into a cotton-growing monoculture, shipping natural resources to Russia for processing. Since independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has tried to delicately balance East and West, and old traditions with the new.

Located on a historical site along the Silk Road, Tashkent is a modern city of more than three million people. An assortment

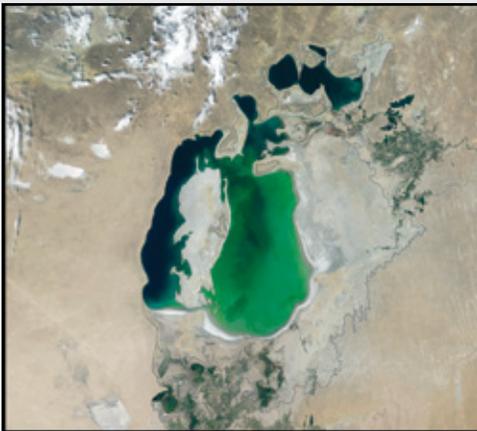
of parks, shopping malls, restaurants and recreation centers make life enjoyable. In 1966, an earthquake leveled much of the city. Volunteers from other former Soviet republics helped rebuild it, and many ended up staying, giving Tashkent a cosmopolitan flavor. The city is home to several impressive art museums, including the Museum of Applied Arts, a restored 19th-century mansion where one can enjoy a permanent exhibit of the traditional arts and contemporary ceramic treasures of Uzbekistan.

The U.S. Mission in Uzbekistan unites 65 direct-hire Americans and 300 local staff around the core objectives of regional security and stability, good governance, increased economic opportunities and improved perceptions of the United States. The embassy benefits from the institutional memory of its Locally Employed Staff members, who have an average service length of 10 years.

In December 2014, Tashkent held the fifth round of U.S.-Uzbekistan Annual Bilateral Consultations, hosting a delegation of 22 people from seven bureaus and agencies led by Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Biswal. "With its abundant natural resources and growing human capital, and as the only Central Asian country that borders all the others as well as Afghanistan, Uzbekistan's place in the region and on the global stage remains just as critical today as it was in the past," said Biswal.



Ambassador Spratlen speaks to Uzbek students about the civil rights movement on the occasion of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day at the Embassy's weekly Chai Chat Club. *Photo by Haqyor Haydarov*



Water diversion programs upstream from the once great Aral Sea (left as it appeared in 2000, and center as it appeared in 2014) have reduced it to a fraction of its 1960 size, when it was the world's fourth largest lake. *Photo by NASA Earth Observatory;* Today much of what was once seabed is dominated by the Aralkum desert (right). *Photo by Ismael Alonso*

Uzbekistan can also play a key role in economic and regional connectivity among Central and South Asian countries. It is instrumental in cargo transit to and from Afghanistan via the Northern Distribution Network and through reverse transit and cargo-overflight agreements that facilitate redeployment of U.S. forces—an example of bilateral cooperation to promote a stable, secure region.

The mission patiently and consistently engages the Uzbek government to strengthen

democratic institutions and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The embassy holds civil-society events and provides Democracy Commission grants for projects that advance these important objectives. Partnering with governmental and nongovernmental organizations on health and economic-growth programs, the embassy has hosted American experts on water and ecotourism, who shared best practices in trans-boundary water management, water dispute resolution and environmental stewardship in the Aral Sea basin—site of one of the worst man-made environmental disasters in recorded history.

Successful bilateral relations also depends on creating deeper cultural and educational ties. Uzbekistan's most important resource is its people, and more than half of its 31 million residents are under the age of 30.

The public affairs section (PAS) promotes American values through people-to-people connections and educational exchanges. In a challenging and bureaucratic environment, the embassy's Information Resource Center is an effective public diplomacy tool, one of the few venues in Tashkent with free Internet and access to information. PAS also leads two extremely popular and well-attended English-language clubs for Uzbek students.

Recent Uzbek presidential decrees encouraging English-language education have increased the post's educational outreach and collaboration opportunities. Public Affairs Officer Jon Larsen said he is proud that the U.S. Fulbright scholars, who came to Uzbekistan in 2014, are the first long-term scholars there in nearly 10 years. "With the warming of bilateral relations, we expect to double the number of English Language Fellows in the next academic year," he said.

The increasing appeal of American culture and society in Uzbekistan is evident, as Embassy Tashkent's Consular Section has adjudicated record numbers of visitor visa applications in recent years. "As an entry-level officer, I have been entrusted with leadership roles in both the Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Visa



Cooking up a turkey feast, Public Affairs Officer Jon Larsen demonstrates Thanksgiving traditions on Uzbek TV.

Photo by Alisher Talipov





The Embassy's Information Resource Center (IRC) is a popular meeting spot for Uzbek youth. With over 1,000 visits a month and its collection of 6,500 titles, the IRC is the only place in Tashkent where students can practice American English with native speakers and experience American culture firsthand.

Photo by Daniyar Salihov

Units," said first-tour officer Ben Chapman. "My assignment has been a great management, supervisory and mentoring experience." Consular officers also take charge of outreach efforts: An Uzbek-language how-to video on entering the Diversity Visa Program, produced in cooperation with the PAS, is one of the most viewed videos on the embassy's YouTube channel and helps prevent Uzbek citizens from falling victim to visa fraud.

The fabled towns of Uzbekistan offer endless opportunities to visit farmers markets, ancient mosques and historic mausoleums. One of the most fascinating trips organized by the Community Liaison Office is to the Nukus Museum of Art in Karakalpakstan. This world-class museum in the desert houses thousands of previously banned Soviet constructivist and avant-garde art works spirited away for safekeeping by famed art collector and painter Igor Savitsky.

Uzbekistan's historic gems lie within easy reach of Tashkent: Samarkand is a two-hour, high-speed train ride away, and Bukhara and Khiva, the latter a UNESCO World Heritage Site, are only an hour away by plane. Although many have heard of these Silk Road cities, fewer know of the beauty and serenity of the mountains and nature preserves just outside Tashkent. The city is surrounded by snow-capped mountains, offering skiing in the winter and hiking during the spring and autumn. Embassy families often visit Chorvak, a reservoir about an hour outside of Tashkent, for swimming, sailboating and wind surfing. Mountain valleys above the reservoir are interspersed with trails with breathtaking vistas.

Uzbekistan boasts a diverse, hearty and tasty cuisine. The primary staple is plov, a scrumptious dish of rice, spices,

"YOU CANNOT CLAP WITH ONLY ONE HAND."

- UZBEK POET ALISHER NAVOI

PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Embassy Tashkent's Country Team has excelled in terms of interagency teamwork and productive partnership with Uzbek interlocutors. Some examples follow:

- USAID in Uzbekistan oversees a \$10 million budget focused on agriculture, trade, governance and the legal system, infectious disease and human trafficking. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, USAID has provided more than \$356 million in assistance to the Uzbek people and helped the country grow as a new and independent nation. USAID has cooperated with governmental organizations, businesses and communities to strengthen civil society, enhance health systems, increase incomes and promote trade.
- Embassy Tashkent is a leader in regional efforts to address pandemic threats. An example of the strong interagency cooperation is the partnership of the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These agencies collectively work to strengthen Uzbekistan's capability to effectively respond to infectious diseases through the Cooperative Biological Engagement Program (CBEP). They cooperatively worked on the 2013 opening of the CBEP National Laboratory Training Center at the Tashkent Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and the 2014 integration of CBEP postgraduate training curriculum with the Ministry of Health.
- The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Tashkent office was the first opened in Central Asia. DEA efforts here have been steadily increasing, culminating in the signing of several Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). "The goal of these MOUs is to promote sharing of criminal information and greater operational engagement in an effort to target and dismantle the transnational and international criminal and terrorist networks operating in Central Asia," said DEA Country Attaché Ken Neihl.



Post of the Month

carrots, dried fruits and juicy chunks of lamb, topped with roasted garlic. Uzbek people are proud of their old culinary tradition and treat their bread, or “non,” with great respect, considering it sinful to throw it away and disrespectful to even place it upside-down on your plate. Uzbek vegetables and fruits, particularly melons and pomegranates, are plentiful and delicious.

Although Russian is widely spoken in Uzbekistan, learning a few words of Uzbek helps break down barriers. Uzbeks are proud of their country and are eager to share their rich culture and ancient traditions. The Post Language Program and its experienced instructors meet a variety of student needs by teaching Russian and Uzbek alike. Special program activities and field trips provide unique insight into Uzbek life.

The Tashkent International School is one of the best international schools in Central Asia. In fact, several embassy families have returned to serve in Uzbekistan partly because of the school’s excellent program. Next door is the Tashkent International Clinic, a medical facility equipped with state-of-the-art technology and staffed with top healthcare professionals.

The strategy of Mission Uzbekistan draws on the historical aura of the ancient Silk Road, which bridged and connected past civilizations and is a model for the exigencies of today’s interconnected world. Serving in Tashkent is an opportunity to engage in substantive work in a country known for its challenging operating environment and warm hospitality.

Embassy Tashkent believes the recent, albeit gradual, warming of bilateral relations will further widen these opportunities. In the words of the wise Uzbek poet Navoi, “Those who have patience can turn leaves into silk, and rose petals into honey.” ■



At a Glance Tashkent

Capital: Tashkent

Government type: Republic; authoritarian presidential rule with little power outside the executive branch

Area: 447,400 sq km

Population: 28,929,716

Languages: Uzbek, Russian

Religions: Muslim, Eastern Orthodox, other

GDP per capita: \$3,800

Export Commodities: energy products, cotton, gold, mineral fertilizers, ferrous and nonferrous metals, textiles, food products, machinery, automobiles

Export partners: China, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Russia, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan

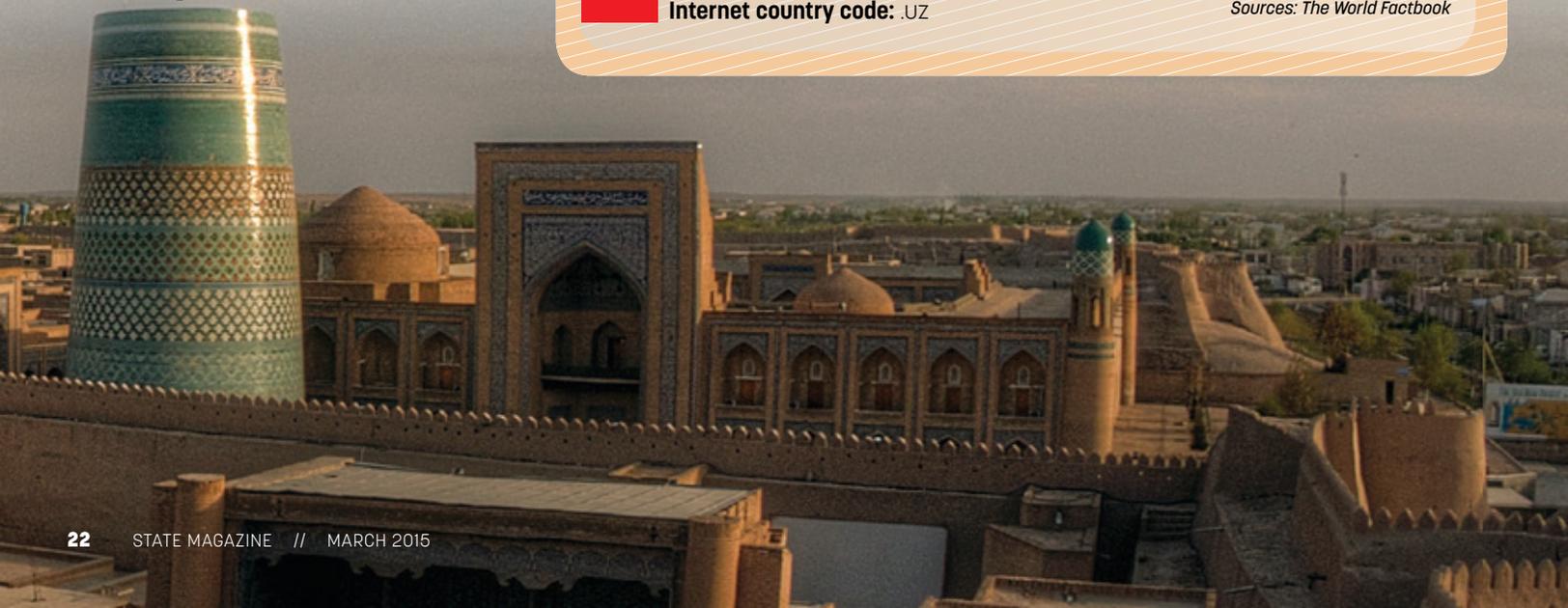
Import Commodities: machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, chemicals, ferrous and nonferrous metals

Import partners: Russia, China, South Korea, Kazakhstan, Germany, Turkey, Ukraine

Currency: Tenge

Internet country code: .UZ

Sources: *The World Factbook*



Roadshows in India

Exchange alumni promote U.S. education

By Angelina Nair, alumni coordinator, U.S. Consulate General in Kolkata

During November and December, the U.S. Consulate General in Kolkata, India, organized roadshows in the cities of Kolkata, Guwahati, Ranchi and Patna with 13 young alumni from a variety of Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)-funded exchange programs presenting on their U.S. experiences to fellow students.

The programs represented included: the Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange (NESA UGRAD), Community College Initiative (CCI), Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES), Benjamin Franklin Summer Institute and the Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSIs) for Student Leaders.

The alumni-participants were particularly enthusiastic about how their exchange experiences changed their lives in terms of personal growth and opening doors to employment opportunities. Recognizing that Indian culture values people-to-people communication, the post also brought in United States-India Education Foundation (USIEF) and EducationUSA experts to provide students with information on preparing for U.S. studies.

The "alumni roadshows" were everything post had hoped for: animated and thought-provoking interactions. They empowered alumni and encouraged them to play key roles in future alumni network programs in their communities. The events also caused newly made contacts from throughout the 11 states in the consulate's district to request similar events for their cities.

Education is highly prized in India and is a focal point in the bilateral relationship. The program strengthened bilateral ties by enhancing one of the biggest U.S. exports to India, higher education. International students bring in more than \$24 billion annually to the U.S. economy. A full 102,673 Indian students are currently studying in the United States, a 6.1 percent increase from the previous year. (More information is at the Open Doors website.) Consulate General Kolkata saw a 15 percent increase in student visa applications in fiscal 2014, compared with fiscal 2013.

The consulate partnered with local alumni in each of the cities to identify schools and colleges that would most benefit from this program. Each presenter from the alumni group, when speaking of his or her experiences, highlighted

what was most impressive about that cultural immersion. Then, students asked questions on a variety of topics, including adjusting to the U.S. college curriculum and choosing majors. Aged 19 to 30, the presenters connected easily with their audiences over such specific topics as concern about the trustworthiness of Internet information.

One member of the alumni delegation, Shubham Kumar, from the 2011 YES program, delightedly described how he taught yoga to his American friends. Another presenter, Aashna Doshi, from the 2013 NESA UGRAD program, spoke of combining textbook studies with extracurricular activities.

The alumni also related their experiences with community service programs. Both

"It is reassuring for them ... to hear it from a fellow Indian student who's already been there, and we can convince them to just go for it." - Anupam Kumar

Zenith Lairkenyabam (from the 2014 CCI program) and Shanchui Marchang (from the 2009 NESA UGRAD program) encouraged prospective students to become more involved and contribute to their communities when returning from their U.S. studies. In fact, Anupam Kumar (from the 2011 YES program) was so inspired by what he saw of the spirit of U.S. public service that he told audiences he now wants to serve his country in the same way. (Kumar is preparing for India's competitive civil service examinations.)

Participants also debunked cultural myths. Akash Prasad, from the 2012 Benjamin Franklin Summer Institute program, said he was amazed American families could be so warm and loving, "just like us Indians!" Other alumni who also lived with U.S. host families told attendees that they now had U.S. "moms and dads" and remain close to their host families.

The alumni also developed interfaith connections on their exchanges. They told prospective students of how welcoming the United States is of people from different communities and cultures, and the equal space and respect given followers of all religious beliefs. One 2009 YES program participant



One of the alumni on the tour, Akash Prasad, center, meets with students who heard about his U.S. experiences.

Photo by Angelina Nair

said that, in speaking with American classmates about being a Muslim, he dispelled many misconceptions about Islam.

When American classmates had asked why he didn't convert to another religion, he recalled, "I started talking to them about Islam and what it really teaches, as opposed to the popular incorrect notions." They were accepting and asked a lot of questions, he said. "It was very encouraging to see this trend and acceptance among my young friends."

Media covered the roadshow extensively. Representatives from leading English and local-language print and electronic media outlets attended the events, and alumni engaged in radio interviews, which further spread the word. Media amplification reached approximately 43 million Indians. U.S. Consulate General Kolkata's Facebook page, which has more than 176,000 fans, also featured the roadshow.

As a result of the engagement and publicity, a significantly larger number of students in India's second-tier cities are now keen on college study in the United States. Traditionally, Indian metro areas such as New Delhi and Mumbai have been the main centers attracting Indian students to U.S. universities, but there's now strong interest from second-tier cities' students and school principals, especially in science, technology, engineering and math.

The alumni delegation's presentations, plus the educational advising and interactive sessions involved in the outreach effort, provided students attending the sessions with the total information package on U.S. study. Alumnus Anupam Kumar said he now expects students who heard the presentations will start applying to U.S. colleges.

"It is reassuring for them," he said, "to hear it from a fellow Indian student who's already been there, and we can convince them to just go for it." ■



FS Advisers

CDOs are employees' advocates, mentors

Story and photos by Molly Stephenson, career development officer for public diplomacy officers and specialists, Bureau of Human Resources

The Department's 44 Career Development Officers (CDOs) stand ready to advise Foreign Service employees throughout their careers, whether on how to submit their retirement papers, deal with a lackluster performance evaluation or the loss of a medical clearance. CDOs are Foreign Service specialists and generalists who join the Bureau of Human Resources team for a Washington tour to assist and mentor their colleagues scattered around the globe.

CDOs help clients navigate the assignments process, advocate for them within the HR system, and provide career counseling and support as needed. For instance, CDO David Jea recently assisted one mid-level economic officer who, just before her flight to her Priority Staffing Post, learned the security situation there had worsened, canceling her assignment and jeopardizing her out-year language tour. With Jea's help, they scoured the vacancies for a one-year position that would allow retention of the out-year language

assignment she had secured thanks to her foreign language skills and early bidding.

"We talked about [her] professional goals, and gaps in her Career Development Program requirements and how to close them," he recalled. Jea also advised that changing promotion rates are giving employees time to deepen and broaden their experience at each grade. The employee eventually landed a domestic assignment that was a substantive addition to her FS résumé.

When this Foreign Service employee later became pregnant with her first child, she again turned to Jea, who outlined leave policies. He made sure she knew her rights under the Family Medical Leave Act and that she could request leave without pay if she didn't have enough sick or annual leave accrued.

And, when her husband joined the Foreign Service, they knew his entry-level assignment took precedence. Jea met with the new tandem couple and encouraged the husband to tell his CDO about his wife's situation, how they wanted to

serve together, however, understood the need to be flexible. Happily, he secured a directed assignment at a neighboring, commuter post. Looking back, Jea appreciates "helping clients through change by giving them the information they need to make the best decisions."

Another CDO, Carolyn Cooley, who supports FS-03 and tenured FS-04 management- and medical-related specialists, said she enjoys helping clients "make good choices for themselves, their families and their careers."

Many CDOs serve as coordinators for cross-cutting HR issues, such as those associated with tandem couples. Cooley, who is the tandem coordinator, said CDOs "continuously examine and revise policies to make sure they are responsive to our clients' current reality."

Cooley recalled how her counseling session with a tandem couple led her to recommend revisions to CDA's policies to make them friendlier to tandems without disadvantaging other employees. The couple was trying to decide whether to serve at separate posts for

the entry-level spouse's first directed tour, or whether the mid-level spouse should take leave without pay so the family could stay together.

A third CDO, Lisa Greenly-Doyle, works with FP-03 and FP-04 clients from the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS). DS work is unique among Foreign Service specialties in that half of its positions are domestic assignments. As a result, the 2,000 DS special agents must transfer home after every two to three tours overseas.

For instance, Greenly-Doyle recently assisted an agent seeking a coveted overseas assignment, for which he received an offer or "handshake." Soon after, the agent learned another agent wanted the same job. "All employees have the right to bring themselves forward, but I always inform clients of the risks," said Greenly-Doyle, whose client was best positioned to get the panel's approval as the bureau's leading candidate, but knew the outcome was uncertain.

To help her client cinch the win, Greenly-Doyle advised producing a compelling personal statement. "Do your research and tell me something that will make your candidacy rise above your peers," she urged.

During the so-called "shoot-out," when a bidder challenges the bureau's preferred candidate, the panel reviewed job requirements, each candidate's statement and the bureau's rationale for its choice. Greenly-Doyle highlighted her client's multiple Priority Staffing Post tours and current domestic assignment. The panel chose him, and Greenly-Doyle delivered the good news.

Another CDO, Jesse Naputi, who works with FP-04 clients, recalled a more delicate,

but not atypical, work challenge. He was helping an Information Management (IM) Specialist who was faced with a souring relationship with his boss. Naputi consulted with his colleagues to get a clear idea of the options for an employee in a difficult work relationship, since CDOs have access to "the collective experience and perspective of the 100-plus members of the [Office of] Career Development and Assignments team."

Next, Naputi advised his client to talk to his own mentors and seek the perspective of others at post, such as the human resources officer or the management officer, or reach out to the Ombudsman's Office or Employee Consultative Services (ECS) in Washington.

When that employee decided that only a curtailment would work, Naputi outlined the steps and financial risk, noting the employee would have to repay the cost of R&R travel if the assignments panel did not grant a waiver. Naputi read the employee's personal statement to the panel, stressing that ECS also strongly supported the employee. The result: his waiver request was approved.

Now, Naputi had to help his client find a new assignment. He suggested targeting overseas positions for which there were very few bidders, since IM was facing staffing deficits in the field.

Naputi told the employee of what he knew about the available positions and the work involved. "Since CDOs are typically a grade or two above their clients, we are able to share lessons learned from our own hands-on experience," he said. But, when that employee got no job offers, Naputi suggested he bring himself forward for a position that had no other bidders. He told his client, "The bureau will oppose [this], but it is up to panel to decide if you get the job."



Lisa Greenly-Doyle, far left, chats with fellow Career Development Officers Susan Ball, Joyce Snider and Steve Widenhouse, left to right, before Assignment Panel.

Naputi helped his client refine his personal statement, urging him to highlight that he was the only at-grade and in-skill-code bidder for the job in question, had the technical expertise and was ready to depart for post immediately to fill a critical service need. The panel agreed and the employee got the posting.

But Naputi's job wasn't finished: Now, he advised his client to look to the new tour



David Jea, left, advocates for a client during a shoot-out.

as "the perfect time to reset your corridor reputation." He urged taking on a positive attitude, providing excellent customer service, demonstrating his technical abilities and getting along with the entire embassy team.

Looking back at the episode, Naputi is pleased the system worked, and the employee acted upon Naputi's advice and is now thriving. The leadership at post agrees. ■



Jesse Naputi, center, presents his client's case to panel members Assignment Officer Teanisha Cates, left, and Career Development Officer Aroosha Rana.



Language Lifeline

Volunteers teach English to North Korean refugees

By Daniel Lee, vice consul, U.S. Embassy in Seoul

Yongbi reservoir in Seosan, South Korea. Photo by Brandon Oh

When Brad Roberson, deputy chief of American Citizen Services at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, asked a group of North Korean refugee students a few years ago what the stars on the United States flag symbolized, he got insight into how much misinformation the students had received in their homeland.

All answered: “One star for each country the United States has invaded.”

Though the capitals of North Korea and South Korea, Pyongyang and Seoul, are only 120 miles apart, few migrants cross a wider cultural chasm than that faced by North Koreans who escape to South Korea. North Korea is one of the most isolated and impoverished countries in the world; South Korea one of the most wired and advanced.

For eight years, volunteers from the U.S. Embassy in Seoul have, through the Embassy English Program, tutored students at the Hangeyore Middle and High School for North Korean refugees, helping them transition to English-obsessed South Korean society. A key post goal is to strengthen young Koreans’ “feelings of partnership and alliance with the United States.” For South Koreans, that can simply mean reminding citizens, who may be too young to remember, about the privations of the Korean War and the U.S. role in Korea’s development.

However, the issue is much more daunting for North Korean refugees, whose formative impressions of the United States have come through Pyongyang’s propaganda.

English is a particular challenge for North Korean refugees. The language is widely viewed

as crucial for academic and career success in highly competitive South Korea. Though students in North Korea begin studying English in elementary school, the quality of the instruction is poor.

Furthermore, the refugees’ formal education is typically disrupted for several years. Many refugees are several years older than their South Korean peers. , a boarding institution funded by the South Korean government, enables refugee students to develop educationally and socially, while insulating them from South Korean academic pressures.

The embassy’s outreach to students at the Hangeyore School through the Embassy English Program began in 2006 under then-Deputy Chief of Mission Mark Minton. As few of the students had any ability in English, most of the initial teachers were Foreign Service officers with strong Korean language skills or Locally Employed Staff.

The program is now run by volunteers and is independent of formal post sponsorship. However, the United States Embassy Association provides funds for buses, supplies and lunch, and an eligible family member, Aric Allen, leads the program, as he has done as a volunteer since 2011.

The program meets monthly, alternating between the students’ school—a 90-minute bus ride south of Seoul—and embassy housing within the U.S. military’s Yongsan Garrison in Seoul. Approximately 35 students participate each month.

Activities are designed to give students the opportunity to use English in a social setting. They can involve composing and

performing or presenting a story or play in English. Students may also watch or discuss a movie, play sports and games, and have lunch together. Korean interns from the public affairs section help keep everything running smoothly and interpret as needed.

According to Allen, the program aims to provide opportunities to connect with Americans using English and to build their confidence by doing so. Volunteer Brad Roberson, who began his second tour in Seoul last year, said he was surprised by the students’ dramatic increase in their speaking ability during his seven-year absence.

A highlight for the students is a twice annual overnight they spend with embassy families on the military base. Students say it’s like being in a foreign country, where the yards of the homes and 1960s ranch houses contrast with the high-rises of surrounding Seoul. Volunteers say the longer, unstructured time gives them a good opportunity to get to know the students better.

Allen said that, during the homestays, volunteers are often able to learn more about individual students’ experiences.

Volunteers say a reason they’re involved is because the program offers a rare opportunity to meet and help North Koreans. Even many of the South Korean interns mention that the program was their first opportunity to meet North Koreans and say they were surprised by the students’ absence of defensiveness.

The volunteers express surprise that the students are such normal teenagers, despite their experiences in North Korea: They are constantly checking cell phones, giggling



Students hold a bake sale with former GSO Judy Semilota, center, to raise funds for the embassy's English program.
Photo by Judith Semilota

and offering strong opinions about Korean pop music and anime. But sometimes the volunteers catch glimpses of the students' unconventional backgrounds. Roberson said that, while doing a vocabulary drill with animal names, he was surprised all of his students reported having seen camels, which are unknown in the temperate Korean climate. With further questioning, he learned the students had seen, and sometimes traveled by, camels during their escapes through the Mongolian desert.

The post's Deputy Chief of Mission at the time, Leslie Bassett, offered another insight: The students remained resilient when technical difficulties arose during a movie night. "Rather than complaining like many teenagers might have done, they simply went on to the next activity," she recalled.

Students also seem open-minded about trying any task. Office Management Specialist Nathalie Han said the boys, especially, are physically demonstrative, often "group-hugging one another in a very 'big-sibling'



Former Ambassador Sung Kim, far left, tells students (faces blurred to protect privacy) of the challenges he faced learning English when he first moved to the United States.
Photo by Kayeon Kim

way." Han said this "search for comfort through human touch" among boys was unusual compared with other cultures in which she has lived.

Students like the interactive sessions as an opportunity to meet non-Koreans and because it's a rare chance to improve their spoken English (many of their families cannot afford private tutoring or study abroad). One student who has participated for two years said the program lets students practice "freely speaking their opinions in front of other people," a telling contrast to her prior educational experiences in the North. Other students concurred, with one praising the supportive atmosphere, because, "if students want to learn, they must not be afraid to make mistakes." Many of the students intend

to pursue international professions such as commerce, cultural exchange and diplomacy, and see English proficiency as necessary.

In November, DCM Bassett sponsored four of the female students to attend the Marine Corps Ball, so they could see Koreans and Americans celebrating their alliance—and be able to dress up and party (one long-term participant was graduating and going to college). Asked to loan the girls the needed dresses, the embassy community offered 23 choices, from frilly to conservative to slinky. At the Ball, the students took plenty of selfie photos, and some South Korean guests were pleasantly surprised to see North Korean refugees at an American event.

The guests added that they hoped to see more such inclusive events in South Korea. ■



Seoul is located a mere 120 miles from Pyongyang but for residents of both cities quality of life could not be further apart.

Photo by Henry Kim



BEX Teams with OPM

Staff who partnered with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) team to help assess more than 1,000 Presidential Management Fellow (PMF) program candidates for OPM's 2015 cycle gather for a group photo. At rear, from left, are Rob Timmins (OPM), Tim Sandusky (BEX), John Shippy (BEX), Mary McCarter-Sheehan (BEX), Ron Harms (BEX), Gil Johnson (BEX), Todd Hewell (OPM) and Aubrey Whitehead (OPM). At front, from left, are Tom Wolfson (BEX), Chris Datta (BEX), Deidre Sexton (OPM), Jean Neitzke (BEX) and Channing Martin (OPM). BEX facilitated the security arrangements and coordinated scheduling for the nearly two dozen assessors from its re-employed annuitant rolls. *Photo by Catherine Jarvis*



Cox Award

At the event in December where the Una Chapman Cox Award for Excellence in Language Teaching was presented were, from left, Chris Sibilla, acting president of the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training; Ambassador Lino Gutierrez, executive director of the Una Chapman Cox Foundation; and award winners Jia Wei-ye (Chinese), Ismini Petraki (Greek), Nada Chadli (Arabic) and Homeira Bahadorani (Persian). From right are FSI Director Ambassador Nancy McEldowney, FSI Dean of the School of Language Studies Ambassador Masha Yovanovitch and Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy. The award recognizes outstanding foreign language instructors at FSI's School of Language Studies. *Photo by Michael Morrison*



AIDS Day Roundtable

Acting Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires Tim Stater, in striped tie at center, welcomes guests at a December roundtable on World AIDS Day. Participants included members of the Ministry of Health, Buenos Aires city government, UNAIDS, UNICEF and other anti-HIV/AIDS groups. The embassy's environment, science, technology and health office, and the health unit and public affairs section held the gathering to raise awareness of the issue's challenges and best practices. Approximately 1,500 people die from AIDS each year in Argentina. *Photo by Michelle Kayser*



Correction: The opening photo for Post of the Month Astana (*State Magazine*, Feb. 2015) erroneously omitted the photographer's credit line. The caption should have read: Towering over Astana, the Bayterek represents the tree of life with a golden egg from the bird of happiness. Its observation deck, a main tourist attraction, consists of two levels and is 97m above ground. *Photo by Stephanie Galeotti*

Tokyo Fitness Challenge

Employees at U.S. Embassy Tokyo participated in the embassy health unit's Fall Fitness Challenge. From October through December, employees logged miles along a virtual trail to Japan's Himeji Castle, 474.6 miles from Tokyo. The 37 participants who exceeded 200 miles received certificates, as did the 14 who surpassed 475 miles.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



Retirements

Civil Service

Anders, Gerald D.
Antio, David G.
Bennett, Carol L.
Bilezikian, Monique A.
Bishop, Jemma W.
Brown Jr., Carlton Joe
Bruce, Jacqueline D.
Burnett, Jilondra Smith
Cabral, John L.
Carney, Michael A.
Carrico, Randy C.
Davis, Charles W.
DeLuca Jr., Robert L.
Dias, Terezinha Santos
Doctor, Michael E.
Duclon, Denise D.

Fulton, Martha C.
Gaspi, Saulo Bazar
Harvey, Vivian E.
Hipsley, Kyle K.
Jones, Clara M.
Kepets, Dawn M.
Kratly, Alexander M.
Lahne, Richard K.
Maynard, Dianne Victoria
Mierzwa, Elizabeth D.
Motley, Cynthia J.
Ortiz-Garcia, Leticia
Papaefthemiou, Achilles
Pinckney, Joyce E.
Reilly, Victoria Marie
Russell, Emma L.
Sandloop, Jeanine L.
Seaholm, Rena M.

Spalding, Paul M.
Speights III, Isaac A.
Stanton, Gregory Ray
Stephens, Theresa
Street, Constance A.
Valli, Shireen B.
Vey, Paul Frank
Yehl, Thomas J.

Foreign Service

Breeden, Philip J.
Browning, Steven Alan
Brown, Jefferson T.
Cheatham, Susan C.
Connerley, William B.
Corbin, Michael Hugh
Doll, Anita K.
Drew, Pearl G.

Georgian, Douglas H.
Hickey, Mary E.
Klopp, Deborah
Krajeski, Thomas C.
Lomellin, Carmen Lynn Jr., Robert S.
Majchrzak, Linda L.
Martin, Charles W.
Meznar, Marc J.
Miller, Bill A.
Mixson, Christina Irene
Mozena, Dan W.
O'Neill, Heidi E.
Proctor, Joseph M.
Salada, Patrick S.
Scott, David A.
Sekellick Jr., Stephen W.
Strawter, Richard J.

Ethics Answers

Q: A local charity has asked if, as part of its fundraiser event, it can auction a private dinner with the ambassador to the highest bidder. The post has determined that it is in the mission's interest to support the charity's fundraising. Can the ambassador participate in this way?

A: No. The post should not auction off a private dinner with the ambassador. A delegation of authority allows employees to fundraise for local charities abroad, provided certain requirements are met and approvals obtained (see 2 FAM 962.15). This situation, however, is outside the scope of that delegation. Auctioning an exclusive dinner with the ambassador gives the appearance that post is selling access to the ambassador and raises issues of use of public office for private gain (i.e., the private gain of the highest bidder). These concerns can be alleviated by taking a different approach to supporting the charity that does not involve auctioning off private access. For example, the ambassador could serve as honorary chair of the fundraiser or the post could offer to host (or co-host) a tea or other event at the embassy, inviting a larger group of donors or potential donors, provided these approaches meet the requirements of 2 FAM 962.15 or are otherwise authorized by the undersecretary for management.

Ethics Answers presents hypothetical ethical scenarios Department employees might face. For help with real ethics questions, email ethicsattorneymailbox@state.gov.

Strides for Lives

Employees' hike to work becomes fundraiser

By Kimberly Atkinson, consular section chief, U.S. Embassy in La Paz - Bolivia

Talk about dedication: Early one morning in January 2012, three Locally Employed Staff of the U.S. Embassy in La Paz (Patricia Viscarra, Carmen Julia Arze, and Marisol Sempertegui) began meeting in the dark to begin a two-hour trek to work. They covered six miles of rugged, breathtaking terrain, starting at 12,000 feet and reaching almost 13,000 feet.

The twice-a-week commute was done to keep healthy and lose weight. But it soon gained a loftier objective: raising money to save hundreds of children's lives.

The trio's walk-to-work routine began as motivational therapy and a matter of convenience, recalled Arze, a graphics assistant in the Public Affairs Section, since they lived in the same neighborhood.

Marisol Sempertegui, an administrative assistant in the Consular Section, had spent part of her childhood in New York, where she participated in a March of Dimes fundraising walk. She had an idea: "I remembered from my childhood how fun it was to raise money for a cause and do the walk," said Sempertegui. "I thought, wouldn't it be great if we could do that here."

The three agreed and through friends were

introduced to the San Luis Foundation, which presented them with surprising facts about childhood cancer in Bolivia. They learned the Children's Hospital in La Paz had only one room with seven beds for its cancer patients and that the national health care system could only afford limited chemotherapy treatments.

"Families did not have money to pay for a full series of treatment," said Viscarra. "After the government provided the first two or three chemo treatments," noted Sempertegui, "the families would hope that this would be enough to cure their child."

It wasn't. No children survived after such minimal treatment at the hospital.

The trio decided to act. "We not only wanted to raise money to help these children," commented Viscarra, "we also wanted to do something to encourage healthy living, to raise awareness about cancer prevention."

The first fundraising walk sought just 100 participants paying \$15 each, since \$1,500 would buy one full series of chemotherapy treatment at the hospital. Once the group started knocking on doors and seeking corporate sponsorship, the floodgates opened. "People didn't really know about the conditions of the hospital" said Viscarra. "By telling the young people's stories, it inspired

others to visit the hospital and see for themselves, first hand."

Local TV and newspapers came onboard, as did multinational corporations and the local government. A full 1,500 participants showed up for the first Walk for Life in 2012. By October 2014, the third annual walk—now grown to 3,000 participants—raised more than \$140,000 to benefit the cancer wing of the Children's Hospital.

The donations have paid for chemotherapy for more than 200 children, and the survival rate of children seeking treatment at the hospital has gone from zero to 35 percent. That means more than 80 children have survived cancer. Recently, the city's mayor honored the three friends with the city's Medal of Civic Honor.

"All of the proceeds from the walk go to the kids," said Viscarra. "Transparency is very important and we're determined that the children receive 100 percent of proceeds from the walk."

"Ironically," said Sempertegui "since we started the Walk for Life, we haven't had time to walk to work." Bemused, they admit they have to find a new exercise to lose weight, one that hopefully will spark more civic-mindedness. ■

Participants prepare for the walk, which has underwritten chemotherapy for more than 200 children.
Photo by Carmen Julia Arze



LYING IN STATE:
MEET MORTON
MORBLOW
INSCRUTABLE
SUPERVISOR



BOYD, I NEED THIS INFO MEMO ON THE ECONOMIC TALKS TO HAVE MORE ZAZZ.

UH, ZAZZ?



YOU KNOW, SNAP! ZING! POWZA! AND DARIA, I NEED YOU TO GET TOGETHER WITH THAT GUY WHO DOES MULTILATERAL STUFF.

UH...



YOU KNOW, THE GUY WITH THE LUSH EAR HAIR. AND BIGGLES, CAN YOU GO TO THAT INTERAGENCY THING? JUST DON'T MENTION THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S WHATSIT!



OKAY, LET'S GO -AND REMEMBER, LIKE THEY SAID AT MY LAST POST: KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR MARMOT, AND YOUR DONUTS WILL WATCH THEMSELVES.



SO AM I SUPPOSED TO GET A MARMOT?

ONLY IF IT HAS ZAZZ...



AGGELER 2014

Appointments

Rabbi David Nathan Saperstein
U.S. Ambassador
at Large for International
Religious Freedom



Antony J. Blinken
Deputy Secretary of State



Isobel Coleman
U.S. Representative to the
United Nations for U.N.
Management and Reform



Donald L. Heflin
U.S. Ambassador
to Cabo Verde



Robert C. Barber of Massachusetts is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland. Previously, he was an attorney and partner with the law firm Looney & Grossman LLP, where he worked since 1981. Before that, he was an assistant district attorney for New York County and a law clerk in the U.S. attorneys' offices in Boston and Brooklyn. He served on the Obama for America National Finance Committee, including as chair of the New England Steering Committee.

Antony J. Blinken of New York is the new Deputy Secretary of State. Mr. Blinken has held senior foreign policy positions in two administrations over two decades, most recently as assistant to the president and principal deputy national security advisor. He was also national security advisor to the vice president. He served on Capitol Hill as Democratic staff director for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Before that, he was on President Clinton's National Security Council staff and principal advisor for relations with Europe and NATO. From 1993 to 1994, he served as special assistant to the assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs.

Isobel Coleman of New York is the new U.S. Representative to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform, with the rank of ambassador. Previously, she was a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, where she focused on the political economy of the Middle East, democratization, economic development and gender issues. Before that, she was CEO of NursingHands, Inc. and a partner at McKinsey & Company, where she worked with financial institutions.

Donald L. Heflin (SFS) of Virginia is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde. Previously, he was the managing director of the Visa Office in the Bureau of Consular Affairs. Prior to that, he was principal officer in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. He has also been deputy director of the offices of West African Affairs and African Regional and Security Affairs. His other postings include London, Lusaka, Hermosillo, Chennai and Lima.



Robert C. Barber
U.S. Ambassador
to Iceland



Amy J. Hyatt
U.S. Ambassador
to Palau



Richard M. Mills, Jr.
U.S. Ambassador
to Armenia



Margaret Ann Uyehara
U.S. Ambassador
to Montenegro



Amy J. Hyatt (SFS) of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Palau. Previously she was management counselor in Cairo. She was DCM in Helsinki, consul general in Melbourne, and served as Diplomat in Residence at Arizona State University. Other postings include Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, Prague and Norway. In Washington, she worked in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. Prior to entering the Foreign Service, she was a litigation attorney in San Francisco.

Richard M. Mills, Jr. (SFS) of Texas is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia. He most recently served as the DCM in Beirut. He has also been DCM in Valletta, Malta. His other overseas assignments include Baghdad, London, Riyadh, Islamabad, Dublin, St. Petersburg and Paris. Stateside, he was assigned to the U.S. Mission to the U.N. in New York and in the Office of Legislative Affairs. Prior to his Foreign Service career, he worked as an attorney.

Rabbi David Nathan Saperstein of the District of Columbia is Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom. Previously, he was director and counsel of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism and an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center. He was a member of the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. He has served on a number of boards, including The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the National Religious Partnership for the Environment.

Margaret Ann Uyehara (SFS) of Ohio is the new U.S. Ambassador to Montenegro. Most recently, she was executive director of the bureaus of European and Eurasian Affairs and International Organization Affairs. She also served as management counselor at the U.S. Tri-Missions in Vienna and director of the Regional Support Center in Frankfurt. Her other posts include Kyiv, Jakarta, Tokyo, Manila, London and Bamako.



Getting a Leg up on Jet Lag

By Mark Cohen, clinical director, Office of Medical Services

The summer transition season is just around the corner. Along with R&R, home leave, family getaways and the logging of welcome mileage points in the skies comes the bane of many travelers: desynchronization syndrome, otherwise known as jet lag.

What is jet lag? The body has an elegant internal clock, the “circadian rhythm,” for regulating functions that include, most prominently, our sleep patterns, but also digestion and body temperature. The circadian rhythm is influenced in large part by daylight, prompting the release or inhibition of certain hormones (e.g., melatonin) in the brain. The rapid shift across time zones that travelers experience introduces daylight and bedtime to the body at times the body is neither accustomed to nor prepared for. This results in difficulty sleeping at night, wakefulness during the day and, for many, diarrhea or constipation, agitation, headache, muscle aches and fatigue. These symptoms, mild to severe, in part or in total, constitute jet lag. Fortunately, for those traveling with children, severe jet lag is uncommon in younger age groups.

Our bodies need about one day to adjust to every hour of time-zone change, though this can be much shorter for some and much longer for others. Travel from east to west appears easier to adjust to than travel from west to east.

Many ask if there’s something they can take for this. Unfortunately, there often is not. If you Google “jet lag,” the enormous number of references reflects the lack of any one good solution. You can find sources for melatonin, the brain’s natural sleep-associated hormone; complicated schedules for using melatonin; even more complicated schedules for how to adjust your sleep cycle well in advance of travel—a practical impossibility for most of us—and assorted potions, devices and solutions to deal with jet lag. ■

Expert advice for mitigating jet lag:

- Avoid alcohol during air travel and for a day after arrival.
- Drink plenty of water to stay well hydrated.
- If your flight is arriving early to midday, try to sleep on the plane. This may be easier to do with a mild sleep aid (0.3 to 3 mg of the dietary supplement melatonin) or prescription sleep medication, and the use of blackout eyeshades and foam earplugs or headphones.
- After arrival, stay outside in sunlight. (Some experts recommend avoiding bright light until the early afternoon and suggest using sunglasses during the morning.) Activities such as walking during the afternoon add to this benefit.
- If you are too tired on arrival, consider a 20-30 minute nap, as a nap later in the afternoon more closely mimics the body’s natural pattern.
- If you’re traveling east, try to go to bed one hour earlier and wake one hour earlier for a few days before departure. If traveling west, go to bed one hour later and wake one hour later for a few days prior to departure.
- Set your watch to your new destination prior to departure, and use the pending arrival time as a guide for sleeping and waking.
- Consider eating high-protein foods to stay alert and carbohydrates to make you drowsy.
- The dietary supplement melatonin, at a dose of 0.3 to 3 mg, taken on the first night of travel and continued for one to five nights after arrival, may be helpful. Likewise, certain prescription medications such as zolpidem (Ambien®), used at bedtime for several nights after arrival, may also be helpful. (Melatonin is not recommended for children.)
- Don’t Panic Jet lag is temporary, and while most people feel better in a few days to a week, some need several weeks or longer to return to their normal sleep cycle.



Obituaries



Alvin Richard Bradshaw, 79, a retired Foreign Service information management specialist, died at home Dec. 18 in Margate, Fla. He served in the Army in the 1950s and was in Korea as part of the peacekeeping force. He worked for the Department in information technology for 36 years, including postings in Kenya, Togo, Panama and Germany. Retiring in 2000, he moved to Florida and enjoyed fishing, tennis, golf, travel and spending time with family and friends.



Joseph A. Cicala, 102, a retired FSO, died Dec. 28 in northern Virginia, after a brief illness. He began his career as a teacher and then joined the Army during World War II, serving in Africa and Italy, followed by service in the Korean War. His Foreign Service assignments included Palermo, Tijuana, Matamoros and Mexico City. After retirement in 1972, he returned to teaching, accepting additional assignments with various U.S. government agencies. He and his wife became real estate entrepreneurs and contributors to a wide array of charitable, religious and educational institutions.



Michael Joseph D'Eugenio, 63, a Civil Service employee in the Bureau of Information Resource Management died Dec. 10 in Manassas, Va. He worked for four years with the FBI, followed by 10 years at Lockheed Martin in Sunnyvale, Calif., before relocating to the D.C. area in 1990 as an IT specialist for the Department. He loved learning new technologies and keeping his family up to date on the latest software.



Neal T. Donnelly, 82, a retired FSO, died Jan. 12 at home in Chevy Chase, Md. He served in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Korea. In 1960 he joined the U.S. Information Agency. Fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese, he served in Vietnam, Hong Kong and Taiwan. After retiring in 1985, he was an election observer and visitor escort for the Department, worked with the Magsaysay Award recipients for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and wrote three books, including "A Journey Through Chinese Hell," a study of funeral hell scrolls, which he collected and donated to the Smithsonian Institution.



Harry Lewis Hughes, 89, a retired FSO, died Sept. 28 in Vale, S.D. He joined the Binational Centers network in Latin America in 1954 and was posted to Chile. In 1958 he transitioned to the Foreign Service and worked for the U.S. Information Agency, first in Uruguay and then, following a year of graduate African area studies at UCLA, in Dahomey (now Benin), Chad and South Africa. His last foreign post was Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Following retirement in 1984, he and his wife enjoyed volunteer work, playing bridge and spending two months a year at their seaside home in Benicassim, Spain.



Allan Howard Myers, 87, a retired FSO, died Dec. 17 in Savannah, Ga. He served in the Marine Corps during and after World War II. His 40-year career with the federal government as a lawyer specializing in labor relations included 12 years with the U.S. Information Agency. He retired in 1989. He was a keen Civil War scholar and a devout church member, at 4th Presbyterian Church in Bethesda, Md., and Christ Church Episcopal in Savannah, Ga.



Roma Margaret Nedeff, 82, of Parkersburg, W. Va., died Nov. 5. Her 36-year Foreign Service career with the Department and USAID included English teaching assignments in Turkey, Indonesia, Brazil, Vietnam, Congo, Yemen and Korea. For USAID, she worked in Cameroon, Sudan and Egypt. Following her retirement in 1989, she became a volunteer at the White House. A former Eucharistic Minister at St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Washington, D.C., she returned to her hometown of Parkersburg in 2008 and was an active member of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church.



James Francis Relph Jr., 89, a retired FSO, died Dec. 1 in Palo Cedro, Calif. He joined the Department after Army service during World War II. His early postings included Düsseldorf, London and Geneva, where he was a member of the U.S. delegation at the GATT Conference. He was DCM in Chad and Tunisia and later became dean of the School of Area Studies at FSI. After retirement in 1984, he lent his expertise to the Department on human rights and refugee affairs. He enjoyed dancing, playing tennis, spending time with his children and seeing the good in everyone he met.



Christopher Richard, 55, an FSO most recently serving as Assignment Division director in the Bureau of Human Resources, died unexpectedly Jan. 14 at the George Washington University Hospital. His overseas postings included Lisbon, Islamabad, Rome and Bangkok, plus assignments in the Bureau of Consular Affairs and several other bureaus in Washington. Chris is missed by all those whose lives he enriched around the world. The Department has lost a truly remarkable man and officer.



Ora B. Smith, 67, a retired Civil Service employee, died Jan. 19 in Washington, D.C. She joined the Department in 1963 and worked in the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Management, the Bureau of Consular Affairs and the Bureau of Administration before settling in the Office of Inspector General in 1971. She worked in OIG's Office of Inspections for more than 20 years before retiring in 2011 with almost 50 years of government service. In retirement, she devoted her efforts to encourage the youth of St. James Baptist Church in Washington to further their education.



Sweden



End State

Sweden Pg. 2

A train departing a platform in Stockholm's Metro, known as the T-Bana, leaves a trail of light in its wake in this long-exposure photograph.

Photo by Don McCullough



Korea Pg. 26

Haeinsa temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in South Gyeongsang Province, South Korea, is home to the Tripitaka Koreana, a collection of Buddhist scriptures carved onto wooden printing blocks.

Photo by Sylvain Silver



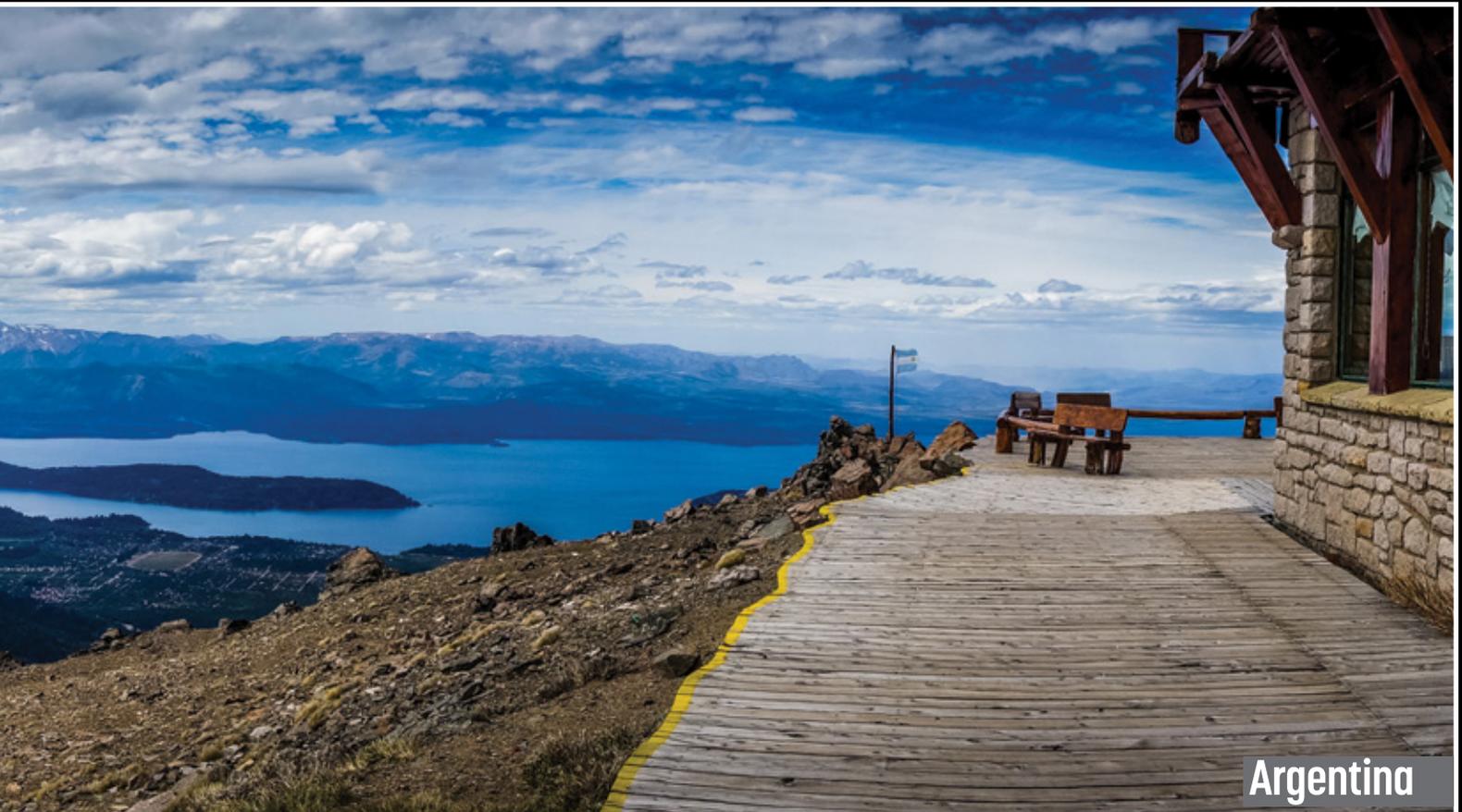
Argentina Pg. 2

A sweeping panorama captures the majesty of Cerro Catedral, a mountain range and popular ski area in Argentina's Nahuel Huapi National Park.

Photo by Boris G



Korea



Argentina



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Take Your Child To Work Day

April 23, 2015

The Department invites employees to bring their children ages 9-15 to this popular, educational event, which features fun activities and a chance for kids to see where their parents work.

Stay tuned for the upcoming Department Notice with registration details.

