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Post of the Month

Steadfast partnership flourishes
in Canada's Soaring Metropolis

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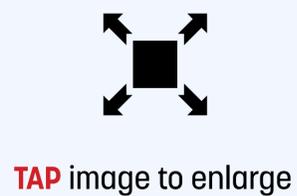
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Photo by Lesley Wright



On the cover

A glowing sculpture brightens the public plaza in front of Toronto City Hall.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco

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USIP President Nancy Lindborg, second from the left, speaks at the event celebrating F's 10th anniversary in June 30.

Photo by Mark Stewart

Foreign Assistance Office Celebrates 10 Years

“Right now, somewhere in this building, a team of State and USAID employees is coming up with a creative, thoughtful and well-constructed policy plan that is likely missing one tiny little thing: resources,” said Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources (D-MR) Heather Higginbottom at the June celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, an event titled “F at 10: A Decade of Impact.”

“Today, the people in that room can move forward, because F is there,” she said.

Higginbottom’s presentation kicked off “F at 10,” which featured a panel discussion about “The Future Business Model of Aid.” Speakers included representatives of the private sector, nongovernment organizations and think tanks. They discussed foreign aid, how to measure its measure effectiveness and what the future of foreign assistance will look like.

Speakers included Carlos Cornejo, senior vice president for New Consumers at MasterCard International; Ambassador Michael Klosson, Save the Children Foundation’s vice president for Policy and Humanitarian Response; Nancy Lindborg, President and CEO of the U.S. Institute for Peace; and Alex Thier, CEO of the organization Triple Helix. They joined a dialogue led by Elmira Bayrasli, co-founder of the organization Foreign Policy Interrupted.

A key point raised in their discussion was that joint efforts between the U.S. government, NGOs, think tanks and private sector communities must continue.

“The State Department and USAID joint effort needs to continue,” Lindborg observed.

“Public-private partnerships and tech innovation are key,” said Cornejo.

As for the future of foreign assistance, those involved said it will require the U.S. government, private sector, NGOs and think tanks to continue working together, to become more nimble and agile in solving global challenges and furthering U.S. foreign policy. ■





The FSYA winners include, at bottom from left, Alessandra Youth, Brendan Boyd, Sebastian Phemister, Cole Blackman, Penelope Duran, Lara Welch, Miranda Walls, Helen Reynolds and Kay Branaman Eakin. At top from left are Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Carol Perez, FLO Director Susan Frost, Tristan Phemister, Abigail Blaser, Vivienne Phemister, Ingrid Bayer, Divine Grimes, Hannah Feeken and Foreign Service Youth Foundation President John Naland. *Photo by Mark Stewart*

FS Youth Recognized at Awards Ceremony

At July's annual Foreign Service Youth Awards ceremony, hosted by the Foreign Service Youth Foundation (FSYF), Foreign Service children received cash prizes and academic merit awards for their art, essay writing, video production, community service and scholarly achievements. The first Foreign Service Youth Advocacy Award was also presented, honoring an adult who has demonstrated long-term commitment to Foreign Service youth, as were the Associates of American Foreign Service Worldwide (AAFSW) Scholarship Merit Awards.

Bureau of Human Resources Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Carol Perez spoke about the uniqueness of FS youths' global experiences and encouraged attendees to embrace their multicultural roots and use them to reach out to the world. The contest's entries all reflected that objective.

This year's FSYF Art Contest theme was "Wherever You Go Becomes a Part of You." In the essay contest, FS youth described how their Foreign Service journey has shaped their identities. There were six winners, three in each age category.

Students ages 10–18 in the kidvid contest produced a DVD about life at an overseas post from a young person's perspective. A domestic version of the contest involved FS youth in the Washington, D.C., area making videos depicting life in their local city or county. Four young videographers were awarded prizes. Each year, FSYF's Community Service Contest recognizes FS youth who demonstrate outstanding local volunteerism. This year, there were two prizewinners. FSYF also awarded two high school students academic merit awards.

Information about the FSYF and AAFSW awards programs can be found on the organizations' websites: FSYF.org and AAFSW.org. ■





Near Kagbeni, Nepal, Ambassador Teplitz poses for a selfie with a mother and child. *Photo by Tristram Perry*

Embassy Staff Visit Rural Nepal

Ambassador to Nepal Alaina B. Teplitz traveled to remote villages in the Upper Mustang region of that nation, seeking to experience the area outside the capital of Kathmandu to understand how rural Nepalis live and to see embassy projects in action.

During the trek, undertaken June 10–20 with embassy staff in that mountainous Tibetan border region, Teplitz got a firsthand look at how the U.S. Mission helps preserve the area's special heritage and improve its economic outlook. Through the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, the U.S. government provided more than \$22,000 to restore and clean three historic chortens—Buddhist monuments that guard natural thresholds or commemorate significant events. Doing so helps promote sustainable tourism and teaches local people skills that help improve their livelihoods.

Daily life in Mustang is difficult, but Teplitz said she was impressed by several local entrepreneurs who are developing their communities despite these natural and manmade hardships. She met an educator whose innovative techniques empower youth to preserve Tibetan language. One entrepreneur spoke of promoting locally produced food so that her community can import less and compete in the marketplace.

In all, staff members hiked more than 50 miles, broadening their perspectives about what is possible in Nepal. ■





At the town hall meeting in the Burns Auditorium, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Phil Lussier answers questions.

Photo by Mark Stewart

DG Holds Town Hall with SES

Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy and Director General Arnold Chacon spoke at the inaugural SES Town Hall in late June as part of a broader effort to cultivate excellence in the Senior Executive Service (SES). A recent Executive Order seeks to strengthen the SES with hiring reforms, development programs and improved accountability over the next three years.

“We must communicate what we are doing and be transparent in our implementation,” DG Chacón said, noting SES and Civil Service reforms already underway. “My mission and that of the HR bureau is clear—building a diverse, capable and agile workforce that’s equipped to take on the challenges and opportunities of today, tomorrow and beyond.” He also honored recently appointed executives and those who have received the nation’s highest Civil Service award, the Presidential Rank Award.

The SES Town Hall helped create a dialogue between senior Department leadership and SES members, and among SES members, on potential initiatives and reforms. HR Deputy Assistant Secretary Phil Lussier took part in a question-and-answer session on specific concerns about the reform initiatives.

“We are working to foster a culture of excellence among the SES; in creating an engaged and inclusive workforce we must be clear about our efforts, share relevant information and seek to be understood,” said Carmen Cantor, director of the Office of Civil Service Human Resource Management (CSHRM), which plans future programs with the SES.

More information is available from Cantor at cantorcg@state.gov. ■





Collecting trash with the volunteers are Carlos Burle, far right, and CG Story, third adult from right. *Photo by Raphael Lima*

Consulate Rio Does Beach Cleanup

In June, the U.S. Consulate General in Rio de Janeiro organized its second annual beach cleanup, which also raised awareness about ocean stewardship and volunteerism. Consul General Jimmy Story and two FSOs, who are also surfing aficionados, convinced Brazilian big-wave surfer Carlos Burle to join the effort and broadcast live to his 340,000 Facebook fans. After filling dozens of buckets of trash, the volunteers spent the other half of the day sunning and surfing.

Rio residents' social lives revolve around the beach, and a slew of kiosks dot the seaside promenades offering drinks and snacks, leading to a steady accumulation of trash, including a plethora of plastic straws.

In the cleanup, volunteers spread out along a popular beach frequented by locals and surfers that's a half-hour west of the more famous Ipanema and Copacabana beaches. Inspection of the smooth white sand revealed hundreds of plastic straws, wrappers, plastic bottle caps and other debris. More than 30 consulate volunteers then filled buckets and biodegradable bags with the trash, which went into a dozen 50-gallon trash receptacles.

Story, formerly of the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, said his experience in that bureau made him aware of the damage small plastics can inflict on sea turtles and other ocean wildlife. ConGenRio's Facebook page features a webcast with surfer Burle and has garnered nearly 20,000 views.

The cleanup, a regular event, aims also to build local awareness of the need to protect the environment and to promote volunteerism, ideas gaining popularity in Brazilian culture. ■





David Mack teaches a painting class to Armenian-Georgian students in the town of Marneuli, Georgia. *Photo by Damian Wampler*

Comic Book Artist Visits Tbilisi

Cultural diplomacy and arts exchanges are transformational forces, creating foundations of trust and connecting people through music, dance, film—and even comics. Through ECA’s Arts Envoy program, David Mack, author and illustrator for Marvel Comics, recently traveled to Tbilisi, Georgia, where he entertained a large, young, diverse audience and visited a refugee center and a settlement for displaced people. Mack, an artist associated with Marvel’s “Daredevil” series and the creator of the “Kabuki” series, also conducted seminars for minority youth and the disabled, and held an exhibition of his art.

He also provided tutorials for those interested in creating their own comics.

“I met so many incredibly bright students in Georgia with so many personal stories of their own,” said Mack. “Comics can be a powerful tool for people to express their unique stories in their own personal way.”

Mack isn’t the first comic book artist to visit Georgia under an Embassy Tbilisi-sponsored program. In May, Van Jensen of DC Comics taught writing workshops. Since then, some Georgian youths have created a comic book that responds to the 2008 Russian invasion. That comic book, called “Fatal Error,” is set inside a video game and focuses on gender equality and teamwork, while demonstrating the horrors of war, addiction and domestic violence. ■

Direct from the D.G.

ARNOLD CHACON
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE



Mentoring Matters—Let's Make It Better

Good mentors, like good friends, can make all the difference in a person's life and career. Like friendships, these relationships often happen organically, whether in the workplace or outside of it. In large organizations like the Department, we can ill afford to leave these critical connections solely to chance. Instead, we must identify and replicate what works, incorporate best practices and scale up. To get there, we have to listen and ask the right questions. Thanks to a grant from the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, we've undertaken an independent study of Department mentoring to assess strengths and areas for improvement. Along with training and professional development, mentoring better equips our strong professional Foreign Service and Civil Service to advance the Department's mission.

The Foreign Service Mentoring Program has paired more than 9,000 entry- and mid-level employees since 2000. Their feedback has been positive, but we want to drill down on specifics that can help us do even better. As part of the Cox study, last month more than 3,000 Foreign Service employees received an email containing a brief online survey to gauge the program's effectiveness, ease of use and impact. Though this study is geared to the unique requirements of the Foreign Service, we have our eyes firmly set on the Civil Service as well. The Department's well-established Civil Service Mentoring Program combines monthly meetings and formal networking opportunities. There is a high level of employee interest, but the number of prospective mentees outstrip the number of mentors. Thus, I am reiterating my request for interested Civil Service employees to become mentors and help fuel excellence. Mentors come from all grades, series and specializations. What matters are willingness, motivation and a commitment to support our colleagues.

This year, the Department launched the Mentoring Consortium, an enterprisewide effort to facilitate collaboration among bureaus and employees, and posts that manage their own mentoring programs or are interested in developing one. It provides a platform to share resources and ideas, exchange best practices and learn new strategies.

We all face information overload; sometimes finding the information you need entails searching for the proverbial needle in a haystack. This is one frustration I've heard countless times and experienced myself, and it explains why I've made plain language communication and ease-of-access top priorities. So, we developed an all-in-one online portal of mentoring resources to ensure employees can find what they need. Often, employees need specific guidance to deal with a discrete issue. That's what a situational mentor offers. In June, we issued a worldwide call for situational mentors. The Situational Mentoring Program provides employees access to a database of mentors available to offer advice and to support problem-solving, finishing a project or uncovering a hidden talent. Situational mentoring can involve a brief 15-minute conversation or a year-long relationship.

I've experienced it firsthand: Mentoring works. And I'm deeply grateful to the many employees who have volunteered. If you want to fuel performance, make a difference, change a life—be a mentor. To volunteer or offer ideas, email mentoring@state.gov. ■

Arnold A. Chacon

Diversity Notes

JOHN M. ROBINSON
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS



EEO for the Department's Majority-Minority: LE Staff

The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that by 2043 no one ethnic or racial group will be in the majority in the United States, making the nation majority-minority. Leaders who succeed in the coming years will be those who best understand how diversity contributes to sound workplace practices and how to minimize the potentially divisive effects of our differences. With a workforce composed of nearly 14,000 Foreign Service, 11,000 Civil Service and 50,000 Locally Employed (LE) staff, the Department of State leads the majority-minority paradigm, since LE staff working in other countries comprise 65 percent of the Department's overall workforce. LE staff who are not U.S. citizens have no recourse to U.S. courts to pursue claims of employment discrimination. Yet the Department relies on their service, loyalty and dedication. How does the Department ensure that its high standard of fairness, equity and inclusion also applies to LE staff?

One important way is by allowing non-U.S. citizen LE staff to use the informal Equal Employment Opportunity complaint process, known as EEO counseling, to address allegations of discrimination or reprisal for participating in the EEO process.

Consider the following hypothetical example: A new FSO at an embassy speaks only English and is unnerved by all the non-English chatter and laughter she hears among her LE staff. She, therefore, directs all LE staff under her supervision to speak only English. The LE staff believe that this isn't right, but what can they do?

In such a situation, LE staff can approach the embassy's EEO counselor, or contact the Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR) directly. But how likely are those scenarios to occur? LE staff might hesitate to do so for various reasons, including language barriers, fear of retaliation, cultural norms that discourage raising complaints or a fear they would not be believed. Because some LE staff would feel more comfortable raising EEO concerns with someone who is more familiar with the local context, we created an LE staff EEO Liaison program.

There are 300 LE staff EEO Liaisons at posts worldwide. They are trained by posts' EEO counselors to remain neutral and inform colleagues of ways to address workplace issues, including EEO counseling, the post's grievance process and avenues available under local laws. LE staff EEO Liaisons cannot counsel cases, but they can answer questions about the EEO counseling process.

We thank the LE staff serving as EEO Liaisons for helping S/OCR's programs reach the biggest sector of the Department's workforce. With their help, we can rest assured that the Department is looking out for the best interests of our LE staff. ■

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



Development Professionals

Unit helps employees gain skills, knowledge

By Ariel Fanger, intern, Office of Career Development and Assignments (CDA) Photos by Ed Warner

The professional development opportunities offered to employees through the Professional Development Unit (PDU) of HR's Office of Career Development and Assignments (CDA) include fellowships and detail assignments to organizations outside the Department of State, and training slots at the War Colleges and several universities.

Director General Arnold Chacón has called on employees to set 10-year goals for themselves and sees professional development as a key means for achieving those goals. "I encourage employees to proactively seek out development and training opportunities, and take charge of their careers," he said.

The number of opportunities for fellowships, training and details available to Civil Service and Foreign Service employees changes each year and vary in length. Training opportunities are generally for 10 months to one year and detail assignments are for one year, with some having the option to extend for a second year.

This year featured an early bidding cycle that began in May so that employees could secure assignments prior to the usual September bidding season. The process for submitting application documents for bidding on training and details is now hosted on an online portal, which makes the process more efficient and user-friendly. PDU is constantly evaluating the programs to ensure they meet the professional development needs of the Department.

Professional development programs help employees delve deeply into a specific field or gain fresh perspectives. Jennifer Davis, a National War College (NWC) graduate and recipient of the George Kennan Award from the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), said her time at NWC "was a life-altering experience."

"Having the option to go back to basics and learn what is in America's strategic interest will help me rethink problems going forward in my career," she observed. Headed to a posting in Istanbul, Davis said her NWC experience informs how she'll think about issues facing Turkey.

No one Employee Evaluation Report gets anyone promoted, but promotion boards look favorably at strong performance in professional development assignments as part of an employee's overall growth and experience.

Paul Neville, a Pearson Fellow at the Seattle mayor's office, said a detail assignment brings many benefits, including unexpectedly valuable professional experience. "Seeing local politics is crucial for telling the American story while abroad," he explained. "I have also been able to introduce the mayor's office to the security clearance process, and help implement a new international engagement strategy for Seattle."

Another detailee, former Eagleburger Fellow Patricia Aguilera, said she gained valuable corporate exposure while working at Boeing Commercial. There, she saw how the Department affects overseas companies and learned "how we can advocate for U.S. business interests abroad," she said. "The experience also helped me see more opportunities for public and private partnerships."

Clearly, professional development assignments are a win-win—for employees and the Department. ■



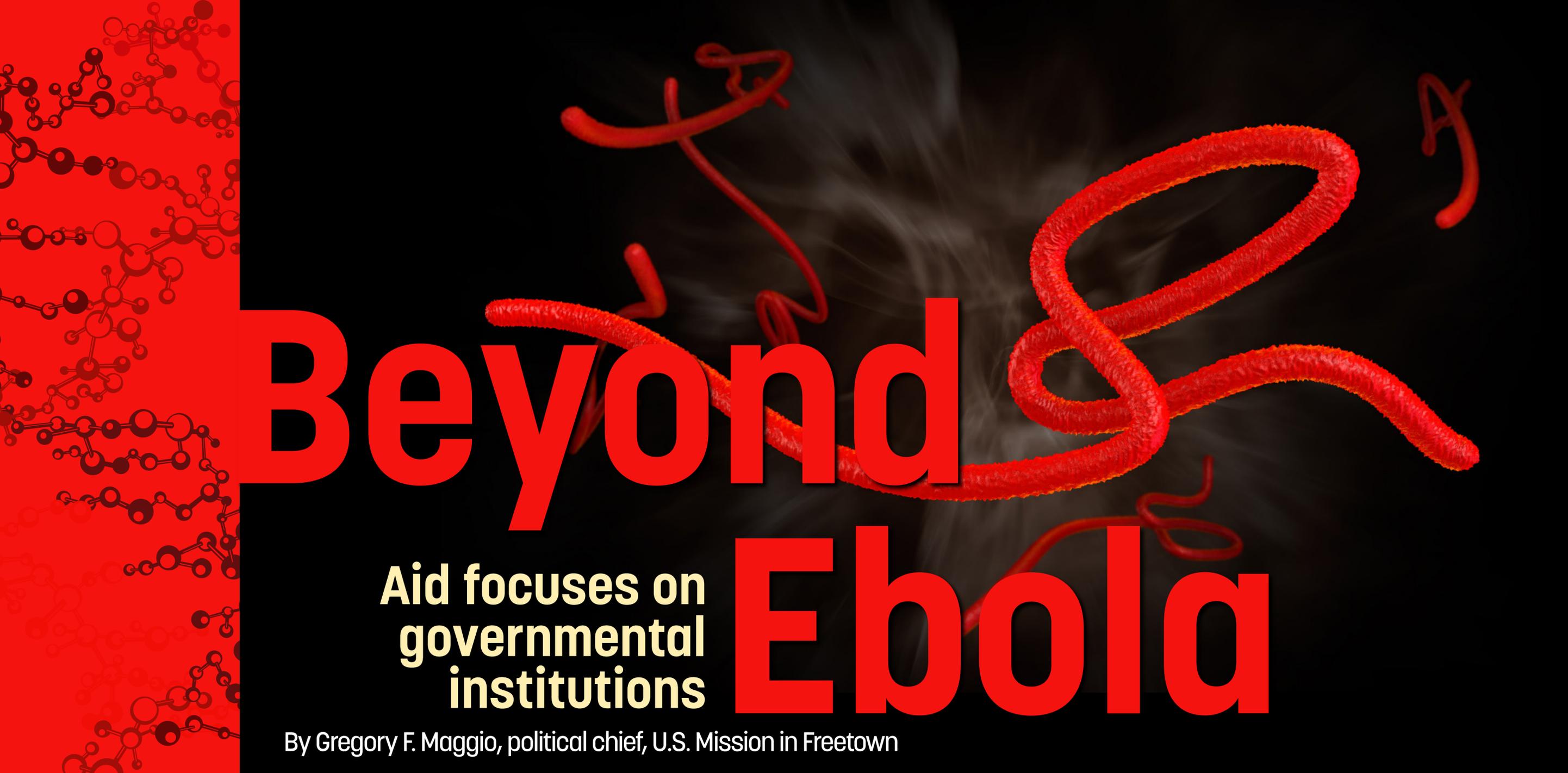
Chief of the Professional Development Unit Sharon Hardy, left, and the author discuss a training plan.



Anthony Taylor and Shearita Rollins discuss a project in their conference room.



Deputy Director of HR/CDA Susan Crystal works at her desk.



Beyond Ebola

**Aid focuses on
governmental
institutions**

By Gregory F. Maggio, political chief, U.S. Mission in Freetown

The United States and Sierra Leone have a long history, stretching back to the American Revolution when the British repatriated hundreds of freed slaves from North America to Freetown, and the U.S. Supreme Court's Amistad decision in 1839 to liberate 53 Sierra Leoneans who had been illegally enslaved. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, American missionaries helped develop the country's educational infrastructure, establishing schools in Freetown and elsewhere.

Sierra Leone, however, has confronted substantial hardships during its history, including a brutal 1991–2002 civil war. The most recent hardship was the Ebola virus epidemic of 2014, which devastated the health care system, shocked the national consciousness and reversed the country's promising economic and political gains. By the epidemic's end in 2015, the disease had infected more than 12,000 individuals, affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of persons and threatened the country's existence.



The U.S. Mission in Sierra Leone played a critical role in the Ebola response effort and continues to aid the country's recovery, having provided more than \$600 million for the response and recovery efforts. Though the crisis has ended, the U.S. Mission in Sierra Leone is continuing to assist the host nation with improving all of its governmental institutions, not just those offering health care.

Among U.S. government-funded initiatives focused on Ebola survivors is a program implemented by the U.S.-based NGO Partners in Health (PIH). Headquartered at the government hospital in Port Loko, which suffered a particularly high incidence of Ebola cases, the program employs Ebola survivors for the hospital's health care and community outreach activities. At the hospital in April, 10 young survivors met with U.S. Mission personnel to tell of experiencing continued joint pain and vision impairment. They also spoke of the social discrimination and rejection from their families they experienced when returning home following their recovery from the disease.

The survivors said that, by offering opportunities to attain respectable jobs and earn income, the PIH program changed public perceptions of the survivors as outcasts and raised their community standing. This accelerated their social reintegration and countered the stigmatization of Ebola survivors elsewhere.

U.S. Federal Judges Beryl Howell, left, and Ricardo Hinojosa, right, review Freetown's Law Courts library with Sierra Leone Supreme Court Justice Nicholas Browne-Marke, center, as part of the American judges' technical assistance visit to the Promoting Transparency in Sierra Leone's Judiciary project.

Photo by Gregory Maggio



One survivor spoke of being “frowned upon by my community after I recovered.” His wife ran away, and he was lonely and faced vision and hearing problems, too, he said. “But thank God today I am serving my colleagues at the Port Loko Hospital,” he added, referring to the PIH program.



Youths benefiting from the USAID-funded WorldFish food security project stand atop a dike at a rice and fish production site in Tonkolili District.

Photo by Gregory Maggio

Likewise, the Ambassador’s Special Self-Help Program (SSH) provided small grants to make a difference in Ebola-affected communities. At Makambo village near Bo, the Ebola virus killed 30 persons, devastating the social and economic fabric. An SSH grant there provided 150 persons, including survivors, widows and orphans with goats, livestock and seeds for planting. It also funded agricultural training to help those affected to restart their lives with good nutrition and improve their economic circumstances.

One beneficiary of the SSH grant in Makambo said it led to distribution of goats to 30 women, 10 of them Ebola survivors. “Some of these goats are pregnant and hopefully there will be many baby goats playing in the yards,” he continued. “Village women are hoping, they are praying, to earn money from selling the goats.”

Another example of the mission’s aid is that provided by the U.S. WorldFish program, which is funded by the mission’s USAID office. WorldFish has established 20 agriculture projects in communities where Ebola undermined the local economy, projects that involve training 500 farmers to operate rice and food-fish ponds. In the Tonkolili District, where childhood malnutrition is a serious problem, 950 households are involved.

Another mission program, one focused on empowering rural women, is serving 180 low-income women in Ebola-affected areas of the Port Loko District. The project aims to raise their economic status and help them play a greater role in their communities through designing and implementing agricultural and other micro projects. The women also get training in economics, leadership and conflict resolution. At the project’s February launch event, Ambassador John Hoover said women’s empowerment “is not just a matter of fairness, but also a means for ensuring that all of society benefits, in terms of peace, stability and prosperity.”



The ambassador added that women should not be afraid but should be empowered, and men should not be afraid to empower women.

More broadly, the mission's efforts to assist with the post-Ebola recovery focus on socioeconomic and political needs. Corruption, lack of transparency, the marginalization of women and weak institutions all affected Sierra Leone's ability to combat Ebola, as did the public's suspicion of government institutions. Ebola survivors spoke of a lack of confidence in the public health care system and even a fear of the medications prescribed by health care providers. One survivor—a PIH program beneficiary—said there was a popular public misperception that, "If you go to a hospital, you will die."

Those problems make clear the need for the nation's citizens to have increased trust in all public institutions, not just hospitals. Therefore, the U.S. Mission is involved in such programs as Access Sierra Leone, which has initiated community dialogues on corruption, created citizen scorecards for monitoring the judiciary and helped journalists publicize and combat corruption. The project also supports citizen demands for greater government accountability and fosters greater community awareness of women's rights, reducing gender-based violence. Access Sierra Leone, which is implemented by the United Nations Development Program, is funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and uses the U.S. Mission in an advisory role.

The U.S. Mission also participates in the Promoting Transparency in

Sierra Leone's Judiciary project, which is developing standardized bail and sentencing guidelines, and seeking greater accountability in the justice sector and to alleviate prison overcrowding. The mission is a member of the project's working group, as are representatives of the host nation's judicial and law enforcement institutions and representatives of prisoners' rights and other human rights groups.

To promote an improved judiciary, the mission in March brought two U.S. federal judges, Beryl Howell and Ricardo Hinojosa, to Sierra Leone to share best practices on bail and sentencing with the working group. The jurists joined the group's national consultations in 11 locations across the nation to speak about the project and hear the public's recommendations on bail and sentencing parameters for specific crimes. The judges' visit emphasized the mission's commitment to Sierra Leone and showed how that commitment extends beyond the post-Ebola recovery to help the host nation improve its judicial and other governance institutions. ■



Ambassador John Hoover, third from right, and his wife, far left, pose with civil society partners at the February launch of the Expanding the Table women's empowerment project in Port Loko District.

Photo by Gregory Maggio



The image features two bright studio lights on a dark background. The lights are positioned on the left and right sides, casting a strong glow. The central area is dark, with some faint outlines of equipment. The overall mood is dramatic and professional.

FESTIVAL TIME

Embassy promotes young filmmakers

By Chris Schirm, assistant public affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Cotonou, Benin

Since the advent of Benin's democracy 25 years ago, the nation's film industry has followed the country's economic trajectory—high expectations but disappointing results. However, a new group of young filmmakers has the talent and determination to bring Beninese film to a larger audience, and the U.S. Embassy in Cotonou has provided some with the resources to leverage their talent into well-received finished products.

Throughout the 1990s, Benin's democratization led to a flowering of creative expression. By the early 2000s, there were a small number of independent movie theaters showcasing local and international films. But the arrival of cheap, pirated DVDs caused all of Benin's movie theaters to close due to lack of patrons. Without theaters to show their wares, Benin's three largest movie production studios are forced to sell their films directly to the public, often out of vans parked in major urban intersections.



While making "Kids Against Malaria," Ayeman Aymar Esse prepares to launch a drone to simulate the flight of a mosquito.
Photo by Jon Fine

The number of young Beninese filmmakers grows annually, largely thanks to Benin's recently established (2006) institute of audiovisual studies (known as ISMA in French), but they need creative outlets. The nation's existing yearly international film festival hosts dozens of films from West Africa, but it's small and the filmmakers need more opportunities to make a living from their craft.

Aware that helping the nation's young filmmakers could advance mission goals, Embassy Cotonou developed a film outreach program to engage the public on such sensitive issues as combatting violent extremism and child trafficking, and addressing climate change and disabled persons' rights.

Stopping the spread of violent extremism to Benin is a key priority, since the terrorist group Boko Haram has attacked Benin's regional neighbors Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. As a response, through public diplomacy the mission hoped to generate a public dialogue about the spread of radicalism.

In 2015, with the support of a public affairs section (PAS) grant, ISMA developed a short film on a practice in northern Benin under which poor families often send young boys to Islamic schools; the schools can exploit the youths, forcing them to beg for the benefit of the teacher. That film, "Talibé," told the story of a boy who was sent to such a school by his parents, and was then recruited by a radical imam to be a suicide bomber.

At the film's Cotonou premier, the audience expressed shock and disbelief that such a practice existed in multiethnic, multireligious Benin. However, when the filmmakers showed imams in Muslim-majority northern Benin the same film, the imams said it raised a valid point for families in their communities.



From left, Project coordinator Virgile Hounkpevi, director Don Kem Koudoro and Michelle Stephenson consult with AFS American documentary filmmakers John-Michel Dissard during filming.

Photo by Cyrille Vito

Next, PAS teamed up with two documentary film producers under the auspices of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the University of Southern California. The producers came to Benin in January with an American Film Showcase (AFS) program and worked with young filmmakers to create a film festival to showcase their work.

“The teams in Benin were more than we could have imagined,” said Michelle Stephenson, one of the AFS American producers. “The amount of work that these participants put in to make these films happen in less than a week was inspiring.”

Under the program, seven teams of filmmakers created short documentaries on such themes as the empowerment of vulnerable populations, civic engagement, entrepreneurship and the environment. The post, in turn, kicked off the week’s activities with a welcoming speech by Beninese-American megastar Djimon Hounsou, who spoke on leadership and acting. At the week’s end, the ISMA Film Festival presented each of the newly made films to a live audience of more than 300 people.

Most recently, PAS collaborated with American activist Sarah Dupont, co-founder of the International Center for Arts and Music in Ouidah, an arts and music school for children in Benin. Dupont had approached the embassy about creating a music video to tackle one of Africa’s most notorious killers, malaria. Her school’s students had created a catchy song for the video, “Malaria, Your Time is Up.”

“I became intrigued with the idea of empowering kids to use the arts to create their own musical voice against the most virulent killers of children today,” said Dupont. “The project is a harmonic collaboration that showcases our greatest abilities as humans to create beauty, problem-solve and work together for a safer and better world.”



Octaviano Aidijinou looks through the viewfinder as the crew prepares to make “Kids Against Malaria.”

Photo by Jon Fine

Next, one of Benin’s most famous singers, four-time Grammy winner Angelique Kidjo, agreed to record the song and appear in the video. PAS and USAID Cotonou worked with UNICEF, Peace Corps and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to find project funding and shape the music video’s narrative to focus on properly using mosquito nets and seeking malaria treatment immediately.

The music video has been posted online and will debut this month in New York in the week leading up to the United Nations General Assembly meeting. (It debuts in October in Benin). To make the music video as widely available as possible, the post and its partners are negotiating with local telecommunications providers to include the song as a preloaded ringtone for all new phones sold during the upcoming winter holidays.

Benin's film industry still faces numerous challenges, and its young filmmakers continue to seek avenues to practice and refine their craft. However, Embassy Cotonou has given these artists the support to harness their talents and address some of the nation's most significant problems, issues that are also key mission priorities. These films have started a dialogue, the first step in using film as a powerful agent of change. ■



Megastar Djimon Hounsou makes the peace sign as he poses with Beninese filmmakers and Embassy Cotonou personnel.

Photo by Tafamba Kpandja



Toronto

Steadfast partnership flourishes in soaring metropolis



Click to watch video



Story and photos by Isaac D. Pacheco

Someone flying over Toronto could be forgiven for confusing the Canadian metropolis with any number of other large North American cities. Rising up along Lake Ontario's northwestern shore, Toronto appears at least cosmetically similar to several major urban centers in the United States, replete with a grid plan-like layout, Major League Baseball stadium and a multiuse arena that hosts National Basketball Association and National Hockey League teams. At street level, the bustling business district and crowded neighborhoods surrounding it conjure images of New York and Chicago, and the variety of languages heard alongside English in local conversations reflects the broad diversity of many international hubs.

However, beneath the big-city exterior, Toronto has a surprisingly small-town feel and boasts a multicultural vibe that is distinctly Canadian.

“The quality of life here is fantastic. Where else in the world can you be stationed overseas, or as we like to say, ‘over lake,’ and have an NBA team? We have the Raptors playing here,” said Michael Wray, regional security officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Toronto. “There are a thousand different festivals here every year. There’s so much to do it’s overwhelming. If you can’t find something to do here, you’re not trying.”

Previous page: Lake Ontario rises up behind the Toronto skyline as seen from a mile above the city.



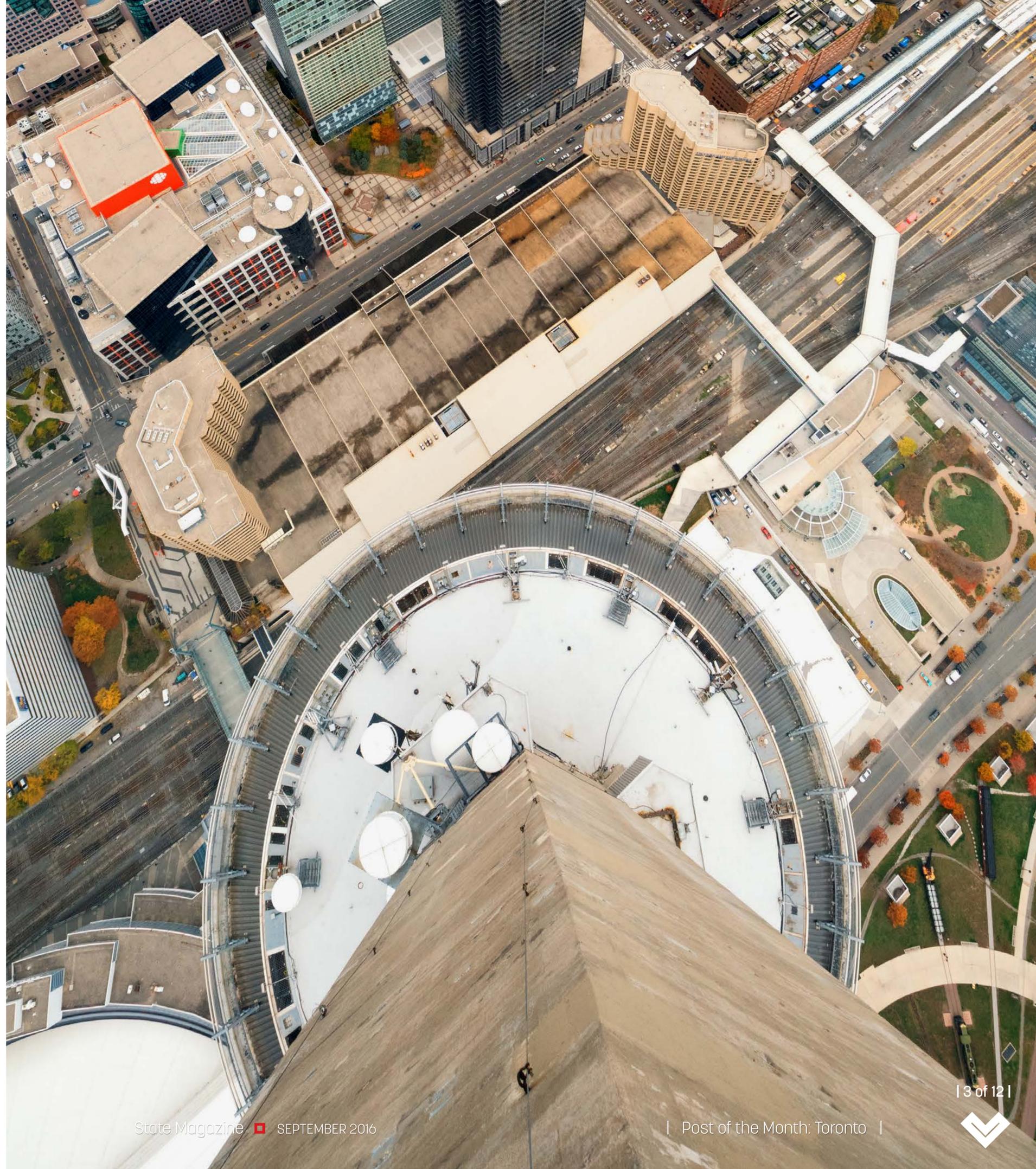
Post of the Month

Toronto, from the Iroquois term meaning “where there are trees in water,” is the largest and most populous city in Canada, and home to a third of the country’s approximately 36 million residents. Toronto’s skyline is not subtle in visually asserting the city’s outside position in North America. The business district is dominated by the Western Hemisphere’s tallest freestanding structure, the 553-meter CN Tower, which boldly symbolizes Toronto’s prominence as a dominant regional and international center for trade, finance, arts and culture. Toronto’s proximity to major cities in the Northeastern United States makes it a popular location for multinational business and investment, and its cultural diversity and surplus of activities make it a popular tourist destination.

“As the fifth largest city in North America, with more than 50 percent of the population born outside of Canada, the U.S. Consulate General in Toronto has a unique and historic role in representing the USA to this diverse community,” said U.S. Ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman.

Consulate General Toronto serves as an interlocutor for the United States in the city, communicating with leaders in government and business, providing consular services to locals and the millions of American citizens who make up the majority of Toronto’s visitors every year, and reinforcing one of the most steadfast economic and security partnerships in the modern era.

The uppermost viewing area of Toronto’s CN Tower provides a breathtaking panoramic perspective of the city.





Visitors to the CN Tower hang off the structure's exterior while participating in the EdgeWalk experience.





A boy slides down the Simcoe WaveDeck, one of several stylized platforms that are equal parts artwork and boardwalk along the Toronto waterfront.

“The U.S.-Canada relationship is one of the closest and most important that we have in the world. We generated \$671 billion in bilateral trade in 2015, which is nearly \$2 billion a day. So, from a trade and commercial relationship, it’s critically important, especially in terms of job creation in the United States” said Consul General Juan A. Alsace. “We have terrific engagement with both the city and provincial officials, and [Embassy] Ottawa looks to us as key player in furthering important Mission objectives not only in trade, but climate change and environment, education, and innovation.”

Canada has long been the United States’ largest international trade partner and Toronto the country’s economic hub. Foreign Service personnel working in this economic center must be able to thrive in a high-tempo operations environment and be adept at multitasking. As Mission Canada’s largest constituent post, and one of the 10 largest posts in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, ConGen Toronto has had to contend with growing pains related to an aging physical infrastructure and an increased demand for its services.



Post of the Month



PINCH AND ZOOM

1.



TAP ONCE TO ACTIVATE
PINCH AND ZOOM FEATURE

2.



PINCH TO ZOOM

3.



TAP, HOLD AND MOVE
TO NAVIGATE THROUGH IMAGE

A man walks past a large aquatic-themed mural in Toronto's "Graffiti Alley," a city-sanctioned art space parallel to Queen Street between Chinatown and the Fashion District.



“It’s not what I expected. It appears to be a small post, but it’s one of the busiest jobs I’ve had because it’s the economic epicenter of Canada,” said Andrea Gorog, political and economic affairs section chief.

Trade is only one of many mutually shared interests that ConGen Toronto tackles every day. The geographic boundary between the United States and Canada created by the Great Lakes has made environmental protection a priority for both countries as well. Water preservation efforts are particularly important in Toronto’s home province of Ontario, which borders Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Lake Superior and Lake Ontario. ConGen officials partner with conservation groups and government leaders to address the effects of climate change and promote conservation of natural resources in the region.

“The climate is a big issue for this province. Now that [Prime Minister] Trudeau has taken office, he’s going to be focusing on it quite a bit, as well. We are exploring how we can contribute to that agenda given that we are so close to the Great Lakes,” said Gorog. “We want to look at water as a resource and how to protect it. How do we ensure that down the road there is water available to our children and grandchildren?”

Another crucial aspect of the partnership is border security, which in many ways defines the relationship between the United States and Canada. The two countries share a nearly 5,500-mile border that makes the efficient, secure exchange of people and goods a top priority for both. More than three-fourths of Consulate General Toronto’s American employees are directly engaged with border security through

Low hanging clouds obscure buildings behind the Cathedral Church of St. James on a rainy morning.



Post of the Month

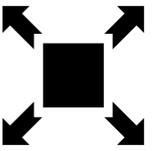


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A couple skates down the main road on Toronto Island on a cool fall evening.



TAP image to enlarge

the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Preclearance program at the city’s main international airport.

“Every month, a couple million American visitors cross the border. Toronto’s Pearson Airport is now the fourth biggest port of entry for the United States and there is a big CBP presence out there—140 officers,” said Scott Renner, consular affairs section chief.

Along with legitimate trade and travel, officials must contend with illegal activities, including smuggling and human trafficking, as well as preventing the unlawful entry of individuals who have ties to terrorist organizations. ConGen Toronto coordinates with law enforcement agencies on both sides of the border to stem the flow of illicit goods and malicious actors, while ensuring that authorized commerce and travel flow smoothly.

“You have fake identities going across the border, fake passports, fake visas and goods that aren’t supposed to be going back and forth, and we wind up getting involved in the different aspects of those investigations,” said RSO Wray. The sheer number of people in proximity to the United States, the number of people who are going over the border every day, is just overwhelming. Fortunately, there are capable and confident intelligence services here. It’s so fantastic to work with such a professional police department as the Toronto police. They bend over backwards to assist us with whatever we need.”

As Canada’s primary international portal, Toronto is home to a burgeoning immigrant community. Some surveys put the number of first-generation residents, described as New Canadians, at more than half of the total population. This preponderance of different nationalities makes visa processing a daunting logistical and linguistic challenge for ConGen Toronto’s consular section. Thirteen consular officers interview people from nearly 60 different countries every day, and 97 percent of the more than 100,000 nonimmigrant visa applications the post processes annually are for third-country nationals.



Post of the Month



Left: Consular officers speak with visitors and process visa applications in ConGen Toronto's busy consular affairs section.

“We’re one of the few consulates in the world that allow people to bring translators. We simply don’t have the people to speak all the different languages we would need,” said Renner. “One moment it’s a Sikh truck driver trying to work in the States, the next person is a Chinese grandmother visiting her kids who wants to go shopping in Buffalo, and the next person is a student at the University of Toronto from Pakistan, and then the next guy is a backup dancer for Madonna.”

Although Consulate General Toronto is the 15th largest passport-issuing post overseas, American citizen services are a key part of the consular section’s work. In addition to the millions of monthly visitors from the United States, consulate officials estimate that more than 600,000 American citizens reside permanently in greater Toronto.

“You might think Canada would not be an adventure, but it is. Canadians are very warm and fun to be around. Toronto is a wonderful city, much bigger and more modern than I’ve ever lived in in the past,” said Eric Rose, the post’s former information program officer. “There are so many pockets of people from different countries. You can walk almost anywhere and find just about any nationality to associate with and learn about.”

Background: Seen from Snake Island, Toronto's towering skyline glows at dusk.



Post of the Month

At a Glance

Canada

Capital: Ottawa

Government Type: Federal parliamentary democracy

Area: 9,984,670 sq km

Population: 35,099,836

Major urban areas: Toronto 6 million; Montreal 4 million; Vancouver 2.5 million; Calgary 1.4 million; Ottawa 1.3 million

Ethnic groups: Canadian 32%, English 20%, French 15.5%, Scottish 14.4%, Irish 13.8%, German 9.8%, Italian 4.5%, Chinese 4.5%, North American Indian 4.2%, other 51% **Note:** respondents often identify with more than one group

Languages: English (official) 60%, French (official) 22%, Punjab 1.4%, Italian 1.3%, Spanish 1.3%, German 1.3%, Cantonese 1.2%, other 13%

Religions: Catholic 39% (includes Roman Catholic 38.8%, other Catholic 0.2%), Protestant 20.3% (includes United Church 6.1%, Anglican 5%, Baptist 1.9%, Lutheran 1.5%, Pentecostal 1.5%, Presbyterian 1.4%, other Protestant 2.9%), Orthodox 1.6%, other Christian 6.3%, Muslim 3.2%, Hindu 1.5%, Sikh 1.4%, Buddhist 1.1%, Jewish 1%, other 0.6%, none 23.9%

Exports (commodities): motor vehicles and parts, industrial machinery, aircraft, telecommunications equipment; chemicals, plastics, fertilizers; wood pulp, timber, crude petroleum, natural gas, electricity, aluminum



Imports: machinery and equipment, motor vehicles and parts, crude oil, chemicals, electricity, durable consumer goods

Currency: Canadian dollar
Internet country code: .ca

* The CIA World Factbook

Refugees Welcome

Department's message reaches millions

By Brian Street, public affairs officer,
Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

On World Refugee Day, June 20, senior Department officials including Secretary of State John Kerry, Deputy Secretaries Tony Blinken and Heather Higginbottom, and Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees, and Migration Anne C. Richard, stressed that refugees are welcome in the United States.

Senior Department leaders, through engagement in a variety of public outreach and media appearances, reminded listeners of America's history as a land comprising those escaping persecution, seeking safety together through a common identity as Americans and having a history of compassion toward those needing help. Secretary Kerry met that day with six Department of State employees who were refugees themselves, or the children of refugees, to hear of the circumstances that brought them to the United States, and of their resulting public service. They spoke of how their personal histories led them to serve the nation. Kerry told the group that some in the United States are trying "to make a negative out of being a refugee or somehow turn people who are refugees into threats." He noted that each of the group's members is "contributing enormously to the work of this department, to the fiber of our country... and they have a story to tell about how America keeps faith with people's dreams and hopes and aspirations."

Later, Kerry participated in the day's largest event, an interfaith iftar (the evening meal served during Ramadan) organized by the Office of the Special Representative for Religious Engagement (S/RGA).



Gathered with children from the All Dulles Area Muslim Society in Virginia during an interfaith event on World Refugee Day are, from left, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Anne C. Richard, Special Representative for Religious Engagement Shaarik Zafar, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Special Envoy Angelina Jolie Pitt and Secretary of State John Kerry.

State Department photo

There, he joined Assistant Secretary Richard, the Department's Special Representative to Muslim Communities Shaarik Zafar and U.N. High Commission for Refugees Special Envoy Angelina Jolie Pitt to meet with a small group of refugees, refugee assistance organizations and religious leaders to hear about their experiences. He said "a huge effort is being made to respond to this [refugee] crisis, but I have to tell you, my friends, all of our efforts still fall short of the need. Every nation, every sector, every individual has a responsibility to try to do more."

Jolie Pitt spoke against the negative rhetoric directed at Muslims—including refugees and said, "When we discriminate, when we imply with our actions that some lives are worth more than others, or when we denigrate the faith, traditions and cultures of any group of people, we weaken our strength in democratic societies."



Earlier in the day at the Holocaust Museum, Blinken was keynote speaker at a naturalization ceremony involving many former refugees. He pointed to his own family's history of fleeing persecution and challenged the new citizens "to continue the work of those who came before us and build a nation that better reflects the values, honors the diversity and lives up to the aspirations of every single one of its citizens."

Two days earlier, in Baltimore, Richard thanked the local community and highlighted the city's leadership as a model of acceptance for refugees and immigrants. In joint remarks with the city's mayor, she lauded the city's openness and its values of tolerance and generosity of spirit, which she said make Baltimore exemplary among U.S. cities.

To amplify these messages and those delivered in more than 30 other public and media engagements associated with refugees, the Department used its

social media channels, reaching more than 700,000 users on World Refugee Day alone. A unique video campaign, which featured Department principals along with other cabinet members from across the administration speaking with refugees about their experiences coming to the United States, launched under the #refugeeswelcome hashtag, headlining the social media outreach. On Twitter, the #refugeeswelcome campaign reached approximately 50 million people in the 24 hours after it was launched.

On World Refugee Day this year, these events, along with multiple other engagements, were a high-profile reminder of our commitment to humanitarian action—particularly as we continue our global leadership in refugee resettlement. Across the U.S. government, the broader message from the day's events was clear: Refugees are welcome in the United States. ■



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Special Envoy Angelina Jolie Pitt and Secretary of State Kerry discuss her work on behalf of refugees and the U.S. commitment to humanitarian assistance across the world.

State Department photo



Y-Team

PAS effort boosts youth engagement

By Brittney Stewart, assistant cultural affairs officer, U.S. Consulate General, Mumbai

With 70 percent of India's population under age 35, the public affairs section (PAS) at the U.S. Consulate General in Mumbai recognized a need to stay engaged with western India's rising youth leaders, potential partners on issues of strategic interest. So PAS created a youth engagement team, its "Y-Team."

Established in July 2015 to focus on influential student leaders and young professionals in the 270 million-person consular district, the Y-Team's programming engages youth leaders, exposes them to U.S. foreign policy objectives, fosters collaboration, promotes a more pro-U.S. outlook and offers programs to empower youth.

The team has one American officer and representatives from each PAS section, including cultural affairs, the library, press and online engagement, giving PAS staff the opportunity to collaborate. The team meets twice monthly to plan programs and outreach events on policy-related topics or to identify youth leaders who can promote the mission's message or partner with its programs.

As a key Mission India priority is bilateral engagement on climate change, much of PAS Mumbai's outreach in the second half of 2015 was linked to the COP21 climate negotiations. The Y-Team first identified the youth leaders in this field and then throughout the year organized relevant events. The events focused upon careers in green activism and environmental journalism, a volunteer fair on service opportunities with environmental NGOs and roundtable discussions with young environmentalists, who offered climate change solutions.



Founder and CEO of SheSays.in Trisha Shetty mentors students from Sophia College for Women, and shares her experience as a law student starting an online legal organization addressing gender-based violence. *Photo by Prasanna Shetty*



The Y-Team members meet regularly, combining their resources and expertise to engage young influencers on strategic issues. From left to right: Jayesh Dadlaney, Priyanka Chaturvedi, Brittney Stewart and Sitalakshmi Moopanar.

State Department Photo

At the events, the Y-Team established new contacts with environmental journalists, think tank researchers, “ecopreneurs,” environmental education teachers, rising environmental activists and socially conscious student leaders. For example, the team identified groups that could host a speaker, environmental documentary filmmaker Christopher Beaver. Since Beaver’s visit, PAS Mumbai has screened on four occasions his film “Racing to Zero,” which highlights San Francisco’s efforts to reduce waste. The screenings were attended by students, activists, academics and business leaders, and at each event participants spoke of incorporating

some of San Francisco’s solutions into their own communities or at least share the film’s message with others. Some of the new contacts also participated in a “vlogging” workshop on how to make short videos to publicize their environmental protection efforts.

The team tackled another mission priority, promoting greater gender equality and women’s safety, by holding a mentorship event for students at a local women’s college. It also hosted a film screening and discussion on sexual harassment with The Circle, a student-led forum that discusses personal experiences of gender-based violence. The team also held a roundtable discussion with young leaders from NGOs focused on promoting girls’ education and a presentation on careers for women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields that was led by a mentor from Google’s Summer of Code program.

Throughout Black History Month in February, the team hosted a poetry contest to discuss civil and human rights. The winner, chosen from among 70 students representing 25 different colleges, became one of the two Indian youths who will participate in a summer program in creative writing at the University of Iowa.

The Y-Team has also engaged with influential groups that could help spread the mission’s message on strategic issues. For example, it organized quarterly young professionals networking events to engage those who are emerging as opinion influencers. During one quarter, a pub trivia quiz for Indian alumni of



The Y-Team members celebrate their one year of successful outreach. From left are Sitalakshmi Moopanar, Priyanka Chaturvedi, Jayesh Dadlaney and the author.

Photo by Milburn Fernandes

U.S. universities allowed alumni to network and help PAS identify potential partners who can promote study at U.S. universities. During another quarter, PAS hosted an LGBTI young professionals networking event in partnership with a storytelling group, engaging with business professionals and human rights activists. Three speakers told of their experiences; one, a South Indian storyteller, told of coming out to his small-town orthodox parents.

The team has also done outreach to such international leadership groups as Asia Society's Asia 21, Al Gore's Climate Reality Project and the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers. The youth leaders in these groups are aiding the team as resource persons for speaker and panel events and as candidates for exchange programs.

The team, having done a full year of programming, recently looked back on its accomplishments, sparking Y-Team member Sitalakshmi Moopnar to say that the best part of being on the team "was the ability to brainstorm ideas, explore ways to reach out to various youth groups and experiment with new programming methods."



Students from the Usha Mittal Institute of Technology, an all-girls engineering school, share their "big dreams" after a film screening and discussion led by Shruti Gupta, a mentor for Google's Summer of Code program. From left to right: Dr. Sanjay Pawar, Shruti Gupta and Brittney Stewart.

State Department Photo

Another team member, Jayesh Dadlaney, said his participation provided a channel "to tap into the mindset and bring young professionals and students for a conversation on issues of strategic interest to the United States, providing them an opportunity to broaden their vision and inspire them to become future leaders."

Thanks to the Y-Team, PAS Mumbai is harmonizing outreach and incorporating influential youths into its programming. The team's work will continue and expand beyond engaging students and student leaders to include successful young entrepreneurs, business professionals and rising civil society leaders.

"So far, we've only scratched the surface," observed team member Priyanka Chaturvedi. ■



Public Affairs Officer Philip Roskamp, in back, and trainer Christoph Geiseler, in front, award certificates to participants, including Y-Team contacts, for video blogger ("vlogger") training on climate change issues.

Photo by Prasanna Shetty



KEYS TO THE PAST

Artifacts open memories' doors

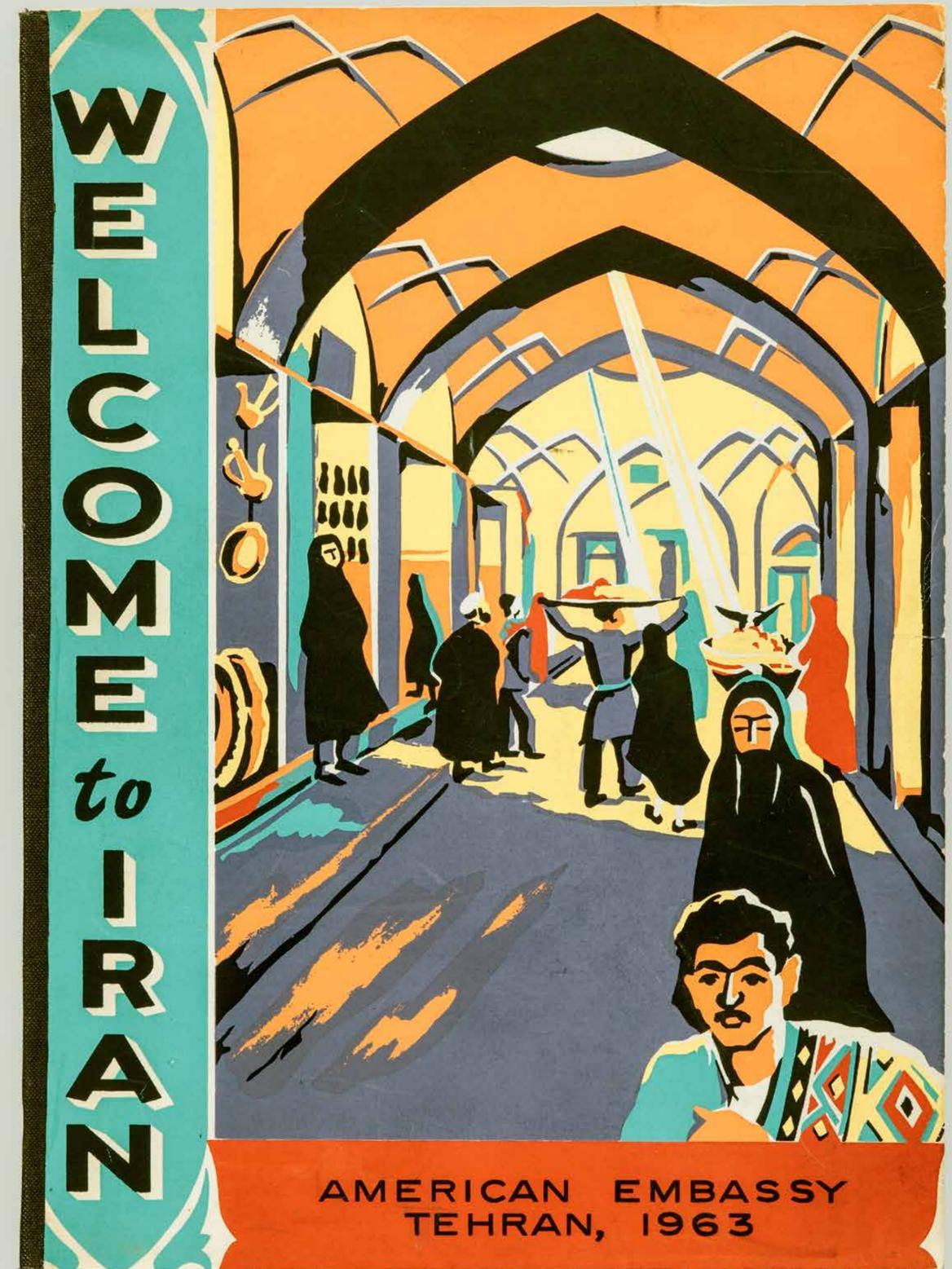
By Kathryn Speckart, collections manager, U.S. Diplomacy Center

The U.S. Diplomacy Center (USDC), now under construction on a site adjoining Main State, will use a broad array of artifacts, images and interactive exhibits to tell the stories of American diplomacy, its activities, programs and practitioners, and why they matter.

Diplomatic artifacts can help tell these stories by embodying an event, place or policy goal, or illustrating a moment in the life of a diplomat. The USDC's unique artifact collection of more than 7,000 items holds several with compelling stories. They include a colorful embassy newcomer's brochure offering information about offices and services, regulations and allowances, housing and life at U.S. Embassy Tehran. It was donated to the USDC by Ambassador Prudence Bushnell, one of the Department's many second-generation Foreign Service officers. The brochure belonged to her father Gerry Bushnell, an FSO who served as the administrative counselor at the embassy in 1963 when Prudence Bushnell was a 16-year-old high school student. Partly inspired by news of the Iran hostage crisis, she joined the Foreign Service in 1981 and served for 25 years, including as U.S. Ambassador to Kenya and to Guatemala.

Another artifact is a certificate that touches on the story of the "Kitchen Debate." During the Cold War in 1959, Vice President Richard Nixon opened the American National Exhibition in Moscow, a cultural exchange initiative. Nixon took Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev on a tour of the exhibit and debated with him the merits of capitalism, a discussion that took place in the exhibit's model kitchen of a contemporary, suburban American house.

FSO Hans N. Tuch, who worked for the Voice of America in Moscow from 1958–1961, escorted Khrushchev and provided impromptu interpretation for part of the tour, and received a unique



This "Welcome to Iran" brochure was produced by the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1963.
State Department photo



certificate for his role in the debate as a member of the vice president's "Kitchen Cabinet." The Russian "password" at the certificate's bottom translates as "peace and friendship."

Another artifact, a hat and polo shirt, tells of one example of the Department's support for peaceful and fair elections, in this case in Nigeria. Donated by the Bureau of African Affairs, the hat and shirt were worn on election day in a 2015 by observers from foreign diplomatic missions. With the logo of the Independent National Electoral Commission, the items reflect successful on-the-ground American diplomatic engagement during this major exercise of civic duty.

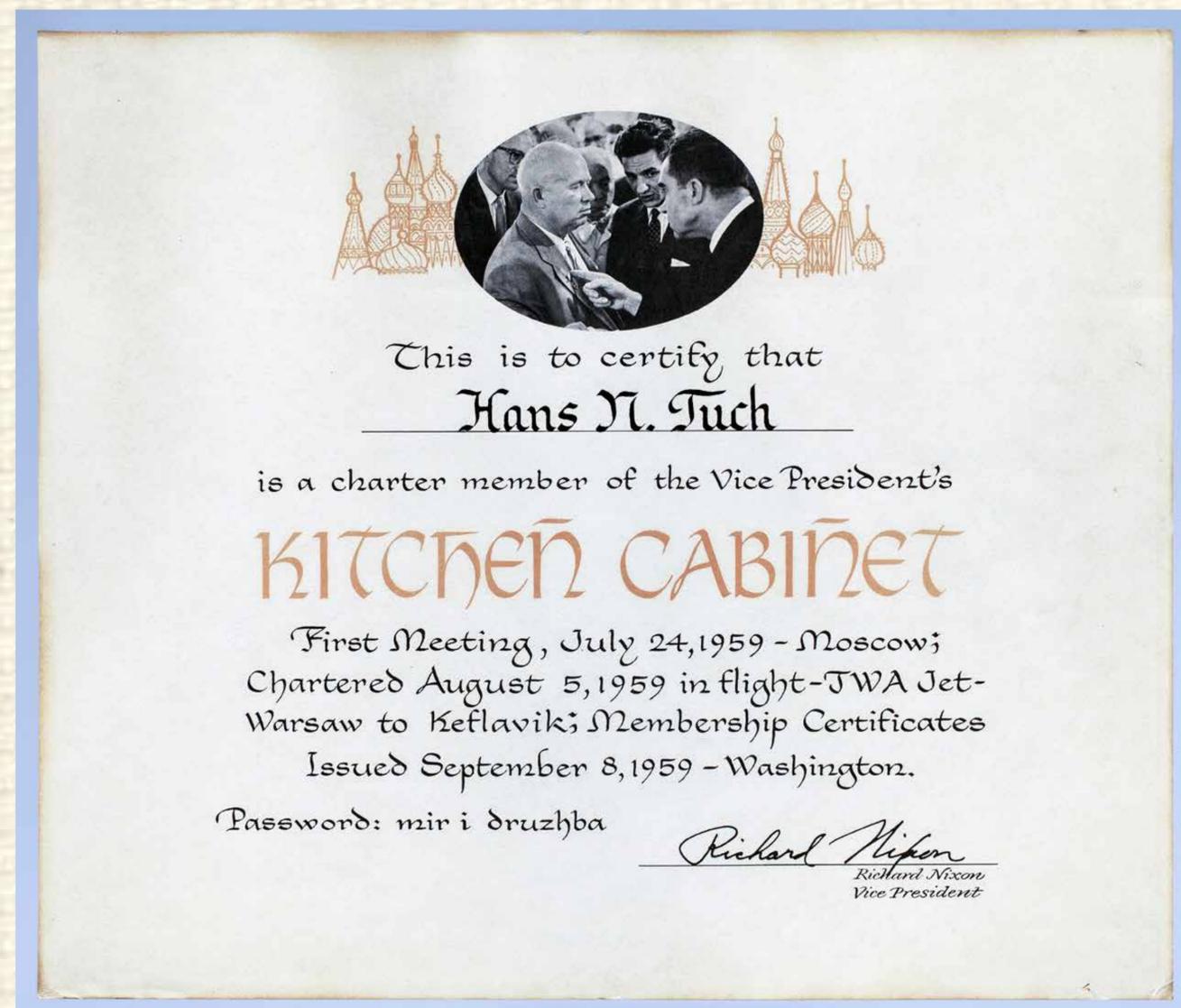
Telling the story of the Department's counternarcotics effort is a tool called a cococho that's used to uproot coca plants, the essential ingredient for cocaine. The tool was developed by Senior Eradication Advisor Francisco "Paco" Alvarez in Bolivia in the late 1990s and has sharp teeth that grab the coca plant by the root and pull it from the soil, eradicating the plant in an environmentally friendly way. The multinational eradication effort also seeks community engagement, promotes alternative crops and includes educational, medical and law enforcement assistance.

Artifacts can also demonstrate the challenges faced by diplomats. Ryan Crocker was ambassador to Syria in 1998 when a mob overcame defenses at the U.S. and British embassies in Damascus and ransacked Ambassador Crocker's residence, smashing windows and destroying the ambassador's car. The rioters also damaged his Foreign Service commission, and after the Office of Presidential



This seal was taken from the podium in the former U.S. Interests Section in Havana and donated by the U.S. Embassy in Havana.

State Department photo



This "Kitchen Cabinet" certificate was provided to now-retired FSO Hans N. Tuch for providing impromptu interpretation during the "Kitchen Debates" in Moscow.

State Department photo

Appointments issued Ambassador Crocker a new commission, it donated the damaged original to the Diplomacy Center.

Another artifact, a consular stamp, tells of a changed diplomatic relationship. The U.S. Embassy to China was in Taipei, Formosa (Taiwan), from 1949 to 1979, when the United States had no relations with the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC). However, after President





A voter in Nigeria in 2015 uses a card reader as part of the voting process, while Ambassador James Entwistle, far right, observes. Second from left is Mission Nigeria Locally Employed staff member Tochukwu Ngamegbulam.
Photo by Mission Nigeria

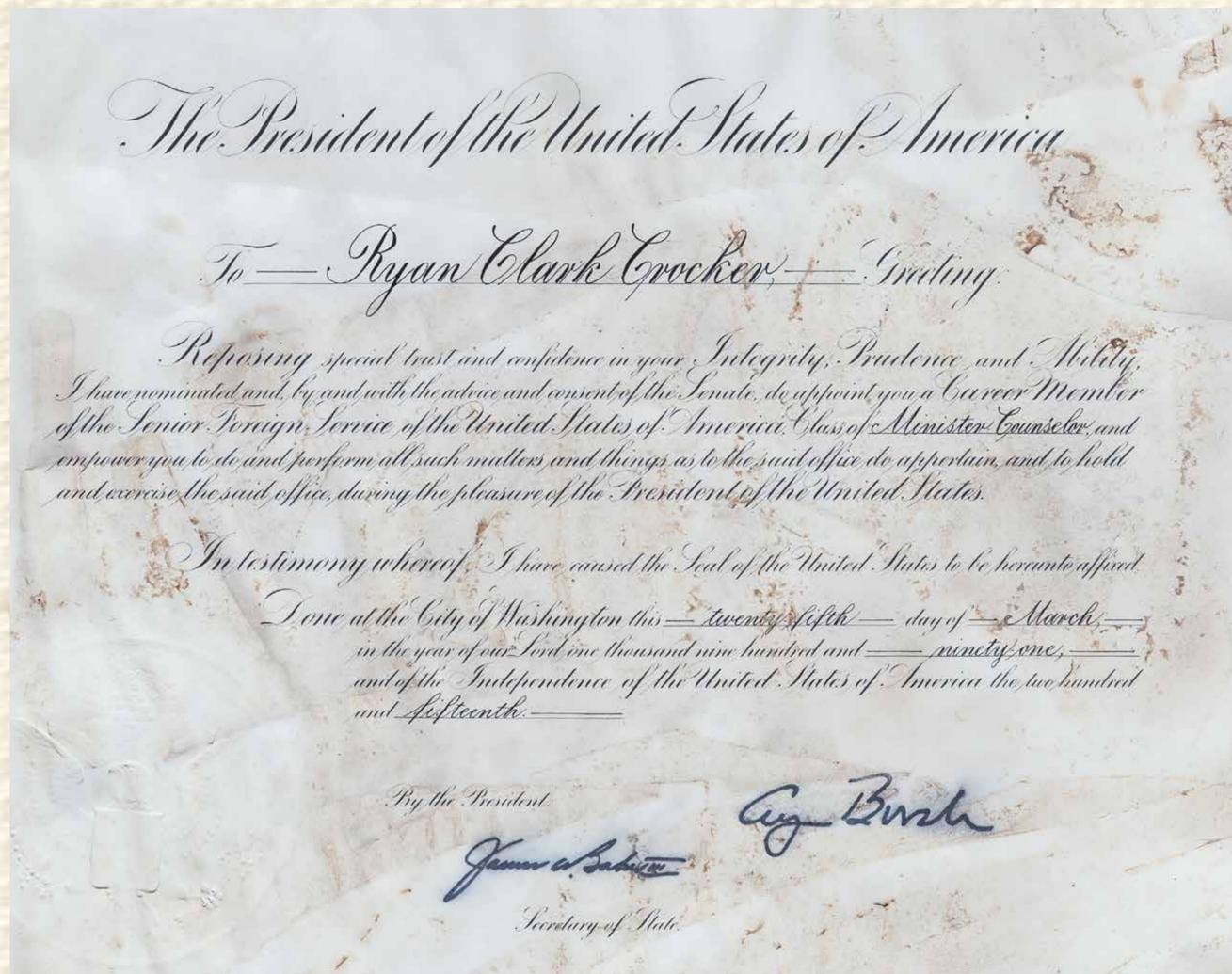


Nixon's historic 1972 visit, the two nations began seeking full diplomatic relations, which were established in 1979, with the PRC and not Taiwan recognized as the sole legitimate government of China. The U.S. Embassy in Taipei closed in that year, and Ambassador Pamela Slutz, acting director of the American Institute in Taiwan from 2001–2003, donated to the USDC the consular stamp from the former Embassy Taipei.

Another item in the artifact collection is from the former U.S. Interests Section in Havana, which was established in 1977 under the protection of the Swiss government. Official diplomatic relations resumed with Cuba in July 2015. The Diplomacy Center hopes to gain more artifacts from the 1976–2015 era of the Interests Section and from President Obama's visit to Havana in March 2016. ■



This consular hand stamp has the seal of the former U.S. Embassy Taipei and was the gift of Ambassador Pamela Slutz. *State Department photo*



This damaged Foreign Service commission promoted Ambassador Ryan Crocker, now retired, to the rank of minister-counselor in 1991.

State Department photo

Those who wish to help the USDC tell other stories of diplomacy can contact its curatorial staff to offer objects relevant to exhibition themes. Before accepting any item in its collection, the center must determine ownership history and assess physical condition. Inquiries can be made to usdc@state.gov or the author at speckartkg@state.gov.

(Assistance with this article was provided by Hilary Olsin-Windecker and Mary Fanous.)



PEOPLE POWER

Hometown Diplomats promote State's value

By David C. Turnbull, cultural affairs officer, U.S. Consulate Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Staring down 600-plus high schoolers in a cavernous gymnasium was not what I had intended on doing when I signed up for the Department's Hometown Diplomats program. It was by far the largest crowd I had ever spoken to, and with a 30-minute Q&A, anything could happen.

In the Q&A, a freshman asked, "What's the deal with Puerto Rico? Is it a state, a country? How can I go there?" I smiled, relieved, and talked about states versus territories, and how to get a passport. All things any first-tour Foreign Service officer could easily handle.

From then on, I knew I could handle anything thrown at me.

While many outside the Department think U.S. diplomats represent State largely at events like cocktail parties, the real work of diplomacy involves tackling global issues or explaining U.S. policy. Sure there are some meals and drinks, but really we are building relationships to promote peace, get business done and see that young people grow up with a positive view of our country.

When making presentations domestically, the Department lacks both the exciting toys other agencies can display and their large marketing budgets. This means it must often rely on word of mouth to promote its mission to the American public. That is where the Hometown Diplomats program comes in, to educate the American public about the work of the Department of State.

The program works because, when FSOs return home for a bit of R&R or home leave, some also take time to reach out to audiences in their hometowns to spread the word about the Department's mission and accomplishments. Since the program's 2002 launch by the Bureau of Public Affairs' Office of Public Engagement, nearly 1,200 Foreign Service and Civil Service employees have used it to promote the Department. On average, about 100 State employees participate each year, reaching out to local organizations, schools, colleges, and state and local elected officials, and doing interviews with local media.

For example, Foreign Service generalist Pamela Pontius spoke as part of the program while visiting her family's hometown, Austin, Texas, after returning from Hyderabad, India. Austin city officials were interested in India, she said, "and were delighted to hear about the expanding U.S. government presence there." She also met with the local Telugu association, where she helped to clarify visa procedures to participants who had friends and family who were eager to come to the United States.

Another program participant, Civil Service employee Renee Lee, spoke to students and alumni at Hawaii Pacific University. She said it was rewarding "to give back to the community where I grew up and share my professional experience of 'how I got here.'" After her talk, an attendee asked, "You mean, someone like me, from a small town on this island, can be like you and one day work for the State Department?"

I got involved when a former professor at the University of Buffalo asked for a commencement speaker for the Department of Romance Languages and Literature's graduating class. I had always wanted to do some outreach back home, so I cleared it with my various bosses and informed the Hometown Diplomats office. Then, they arranged for me to speak to freshman, sophomores and juniors at Buffalo, N.Y.'s, all-boys Canisius High School.

To make my experiences with State meaningful to both 14- to 16-year-olds and new college graduates who would soon enter the job market, I had to be relevant and able to build an interest in diplomacy and statecraft. I had plenty to talk about, from keeping terrorists from obtaining visas, to establishing NATO's postwar relationship with Iraq and to managing bilateral relations with Malaysia.

My commencement remarks focused on how language skills are really both professional and life skills. I urged the graduates to be focused on their goals, yet be flexible enough to adjust them. I encouraged them to harness their fears, reminding them that diplomacy can be complicated, it happens in scary places and will undoubtedly throw them curveballs.

I was also honest about the challenges of this career, and the feedback I got was positive. I am now in touch with a few of those students, as several are now thinking about careers in diplomacy. (One local teacher has since taken the Foreign Service exam.)

With the high schoolers, I started with the basics and explained what it is the Foreign Service does and does not do, why it matters and why diplomatic immunity is not all it's cracked up to be. The engaged and sophisticated audience impressed me. Students asked about the Department's work, foreign contacts that affected me and what it means to be a diplomat, questions I wish I had asked at their age. Nonetheless, I connected with more than a few students who will now think about federal service, diplomacy and State.

In all, I've found that being a Hometown Diplomat is not only rewarding, but indispensable. There is still no replacement for person-to-person contact, especially when trying to spread the word about the Department and the exciting work we do. More information about the program is on the program's website or available by emailing HometownDiplomat@state.gov. ■



The author speaks to students at Canisius High School in Buffalo, N.Y., an all-boys Jesuit academy. Photo by Anne Eisenhower Turnbull



Public Affairs Specialist Amber McIntyre addresses eighth-grade students at Kipp Ways Primary School in Atlanta, Ga. Photo by Taccara Marzette



Geeta Pasi

U.S. Ambassador to Chad

Geeta Pasi (SFS) of New York is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Chad. Until recently, she served as director of the Office of Career Development and Assignments in the Bureau of Human Resources. Prior to that, she was ambassador to Djibouti; director of the Office of East African Affairs; DCM in Dhaka, Bangladesh; and deputy principal officer in Frankfurt. She has also served at posts in Cameroon, Ghana, India and Romania.

Appointments





Carol Z. Perez

U.S. Ambassador to Chile

Carol Z. Perez (SFS) of Virginia is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Chile. Until recently, she was PDAS in the Bureau of Human Resources. Before that, she was PDAS and DAS in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Previously, she was consul general in Milan, deputy executive secretary and executive director of the Executive Secretariat and consul general in Barcelona. Earlier in her career, she held positions in the Office of the Under Secretary for Management and the Executive Secretariat and at posts in Italy and Spain.

Appointments





Douglas Alan Silliman
U.S. Ambassador to Iraq

Douglas Alan Silliman (SFS) of Texas is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq. Most recently, he served as ambassador to Kuwait. Before that, he was a senior advisor in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA), DCM and minister-counselor for political affairs in Baghdad, DCM in Ankara and director of the Office of Southern European Affairs. He also served at posts in Jordan, Haiti, Pakistan and Tunisia.

Appointments





Lawrence Robert Silverman

U.S. Ambassador
to Kuwait

Lawrence Robert Silverman (SFS) of Massachusetts is the new U.S. Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. Most recently, he served as DAS in NEA. Previously, he was director of the Office of Israeli and Palestinian Affairs; special advisor on European Affairs to the vice president; director of the Office of Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus Affairs; deputy director in the Office of Assistance to Europe and Eurasia; DCM in Bratislava (Slovakia); deputy coordinator in the Office of Southern European Affairs; and special assistant to the assistant secretary for NEA. His earlier overseas posts include Syria, Jordan, South Africa, Turkey and Slovakia.

Appointments





Marie L. Yovanovitch

U.S. Ambassador
to Ukraine

Marie L. Yovanovitch (SFS) of Connecticut is the new U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine. Most recently, she served as dean of the School of Language Studies at FSI. Prior to that, she was deputy commandant at the Eisenhower School (National Defense University), PDAS and DAS in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, and ambassador to Armenia and to Kyrgyzstan. She also served as senior advisor and executive assistant in the Office of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs and DCM in Kyiv (Ukraine). Her earlier overseas posts include Canada, Russia, Somalia and the United Kingdom.



BICYCLE SAFETY TIPS

By Charles Bragdon, certified industrial hygienist, Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

Safety Scene



Bicycle riding is a great way to exercise, commute, travel in crowded cities and explore new places. The number of bicycle trips in the United States more than doubled from 1.7 billion in 2001 to 4 billion in 2009, and bicycle commuting has also increased, rising 62 percent since 2000.

FSO Chris Santoro has been commuting by bicycle for the last seven years, during tours in Accra, Ghana, and Surabaya, Indonesia. How has he survived on these roads with heavy traffic and crazy drivers? Santoro suggests focusing on the fact that collisions, primarily those with vehicles, are the biggest killers of bicyclists. When a bike collides with a car or truck, the bicyclist invariably loses.

Santoro and other veteran overseas cyclists also strongly recommend that before venturing out you should check for the availability of bike lanes and nonvehicular roadways. Many cities encourage the use of these alternate paths or limit the circulation of motor vehicles in downtown areas, making them ideal for cycling. Cities also often have their own unique riding rules, so it's good to brief yourself beforehand. For example, riding on sidewalks can lead to fines or disapproval in the United States, but other countries may be more accepting of the practice.

Staying out of or away from car traffic is always a good rule of thumb. If you must merge with autos, do not ride faster than the flow of traffic; approaching vehicles from behind significantly increases the chance of having an accident. When you pass vehicles on the road, it is always safer to do so from the driver's side.

For those who don't own a bike, commercial bike share programs can be found in more than 850 cities worldwide. Most consist of strategically located bike stations where members can pick up a bike at one location and return it to any other. Washington, D.C.'s Capital Bikeshare Program is one successful example. Department employees in Washington can also join the loaner bike program at Main State; to do so, complete and submit the Bicycle Program Participation Agreement available on the A Bureau's website under the Office of Facilities Management Services. There is also a bicycle subsidy program for Department employees in the D.C. area. Additional information is available online.

Bicycling can be a fun and safe way to get around, if you do your part to ride safely and protect yourself. ■

Basic bike safety rules:

- Wear a helmet; Helmets reduce the risk of injury by 85 percent. Your helmet is just a decoration unless you wear it properly. To make sure you are wearing your helmet correctly, check the information on this website: <http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/BicycleSafety>
- Ride with the traffic flow.
- Obey traffic signals, stopping at all stop signs and red lights.
- Use hand signals.
- Stop and look both ways before entering a street.

To avoid collisions:

- Assume that motor vehicle operators (also pedestrians, animals and motor scooters) do not see you. Their range of awareness is usually straight ahead, between clock positions 11 and 1. Even if they see you, they may not stop. Different cultures interpret traffic lights and stop signs differently; they can be easily missed or ignored.
- Set aside your U.S.-centric concepts of right of way or right and wrong. It doesn't matter who caused the collision. The only relevant fact is that if you are involved in a collision you will be flying through the air, headed toward an immovable object with no metal frame, seat belt or airbag to protect you.
- Hold your head up and look around when riding. Look 50 to 100 yards ahead of you. This way you see things starting to happen, and give yourself time to prepare for intersections and people and animals that may step into the street. Look before you start a turn or cross lanes. Don't change direction until you have confirmed your path is clear.
- Be aware of motor vehicles approaching from behind. They are usually moving much faster than you so they will pass before you know it. Get a rear-view mirror and use it. Look at it before making any turns or lane changes. There are a variety of helmet, eyeglass and bicycle-mounted mirrors available.



Embassy Presents Human Rights Awards



Retirements

Ethics Answers

TAP Image
to Read Story

Chargé d'Affaires Liam Wasley presents Vlado Rafael with the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava's Human Rights Defender Award as part of the embassy's May 26 annual human rights awards reception. The event, the post's largest yet, attracted more than 100 guests, including government officials, activists, journalists and diplomats. Rafael received the award in recognition of his promotion of inclusive education for Romani students. ■

Photo by Igor Schneeweiss



Honduras Fulbright Alums Gather



Ambassador James Nealon, fourth from right, participates in Embassy Tegucigalpa's celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Fulbright program and the 25th anniversary of the Fulbright Association of Honduras. The event, attended by 82 former and current Fulbright recipients, also marked the send-off of the first U.S. university-bound scholars under the Fulbright/Banco Atlántida scholarship. Nealon applauded the Fulbright association's garnering of private sector funds to sponsor underprivileged Honduran students, and Banco Atlántida's support. ■

Photo by Edwar Javier Ramirez



Retirements

Ethics Answers

TAP Image
to Read Story



DCM Visits Displaced Children



DCM Edgard Kagan exchanges a fist bump with a child at a home for Rohingya refugee children. On Ramadan, Kagan and staff from the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur visited the home to share pizza with more than 100 refugee children and the facility's administrators. Kagan applauded the home's owner and staff for giving the children a safe haven, education and hope. ■
Photo by Embassy Kuala Lumpur



Retirements

Ethics Answers

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Mission Nepal Flies Rainbow Flag



Ambassador Alaina B. Teplitz, center in shawl, and Embassy Kathmandu staff members participated in a rainbow banner-hanging ceremony to show support for the LGBTI community during June's Pride Month. One self-identified gay Nepali wrote the embassy in response, saying U.S. support of Pride Month meant a great deal to him, and validated the fact that "I am here. And I matter." ■

State Department Photo



Retirements

Ethics Answers

TAP Image
to Read Story



Long-Serving LE Staffer Retires



Celebrating the retirement of Locally Employed (LE) staff member Said Rahman, after 39 years at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, are from left, Rahman, Ambassador P. Michael McKinley and his wife. Rahman, who retired in June, began at the embassy in 1977 as a cook and was most recently a custodian for the general services office, where his supervisor said he was “a wonderful and loyal employee.” Though questioned by the KGB and the Taliban, and injured during a rocket attack, he said he stayed on because “the Americans are my friends, and the embassy is my home.” ■

Photo by Musadeq Sadeq



Retirements

Ethics Answers

TAP Image
to Read Story



OCR Staffer Wins Award



John Robinson, left, director of the Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR), congratulates OCR Equal Employment Manager Sara Mahoney, second from left, at the CAREERS & the disABLED magazine's awards ceremony in Boston after she received the magazine's national 2016 Employee of the Year Award. Also pictured, from right, are Dan Castellano, the award ceremony's host, and Verena Sander, S/OCR Division Chief. ■

Photo courtesy of CAREERS & the disABLED magazine



Retirements

Ethics Answers

TAP Image
to Read Story



Dancers Offer Main State Classes



Teachers for the UP! State Dance Collective gather for a photo in May in the Dean Acheson Auditorium. They are, from bottom, Ameliah L. Croft, Claudette R.L. Rhone and Catherine E. Muller. UP! State Dance Collective is a 2-year-old employee organization that brings State's dancers together. **■**

Photo by Mark Stewart



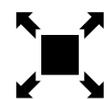
Retirements

Ethics Answers

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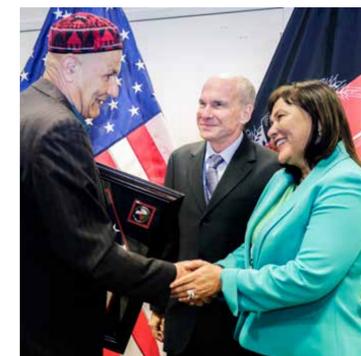


Ethics Answers

Q: I am a Foreign Service officer undertaking a new assignment as an assistant general services officer. In this new position, I will manage procurement, shipping and motor pool teams. I will need to approve purchase orders, too, although I understand the value of many of these orders will be minimal, even under \$3,000. What are my ethical obligations? If I own stock in a particular vendor, do I need to recuse myself from approving a purchase order from that vendor?

A: Most likely you would need to recuse. Federal ethics law prohibits you from working on a matter in which you have a financial interest. If you were to approve a purchase order for goods from a company in which you hold stock, you could violate this rule, which derives from a statute that contains criminal penalties. You, therefore, must recuse yourself, even though the purchase order itself is minimal and would appear unlikely to have any effect on the value of your stock. That said, some financial interests are exempt from these rules. For example, there is an exemption for stock valued at or under \$15,000 in a company traded on a U.S. stock exchange. If you rely on this exemption for de minimis stock holdings, it is important that you keep track of the stock's value and ensure that it does not exceed \$15,000. If no exemption applies to you, you must let somebody else at post approve the purchase order.

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



Retirements

Ethics Answers

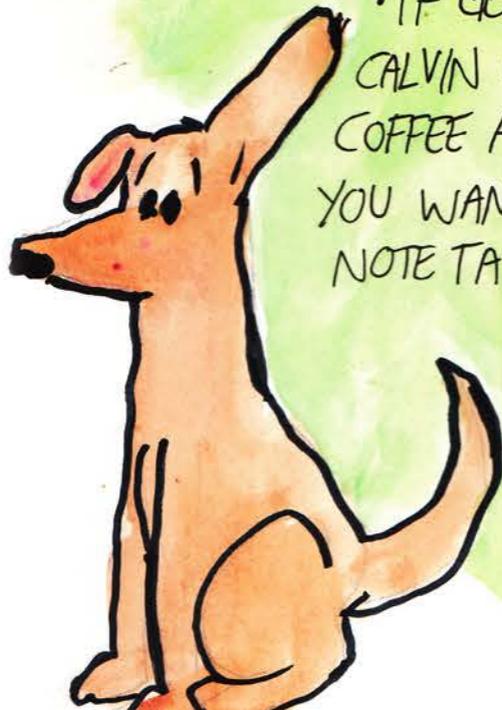
TAP Image
to Read Story



WILLIS McSPADDEN IS BIDDING ON A POSITION IN THE BUREAU OF GLOBAL CHEDDAR AFFAIRS AND HAS LISTED YOU AS A REFERENCE. PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS.



- IF WILLIS WERE A SAUCE, WOULD IT BE A TANGY DELIGHT OR JUST BLAND, EMPTY CALORIES?
- IF YOU WERE ASSIGNED TO AN EMBASSY MENACED BY GIANT BEARS, WOULD YOU EXPECT WILLIS TO COVER HIMSELF IN HONEY AND ACT AS A DIVERSION WHILE OTHERS ESCAPED? WHY?
- IF GENGHIS KHAN, JANE AUSTEN AND CALVIN COOLIDGE WERE HAVING COFFEE AT THE FOGGY BOTTOM, WOULD YOU WANT WILLIS TO BE THE NOTE TAKER?
- CAN DOGS HEAR WILLIS WHISTLE?



• IF A TEAR IN THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM OPENS A WORMHOLE TO A PARALLEL UNIVERSE, DOES WILLIS HAVE THE CORE COMPETENCIES TO BE A SUCCESSFUL CONSULAR OFFICER THERE? PLEASE LIST EXAMPLES.

• IS WILLIS THE KIND OF GUY WHO WOULD FAKE HIS OWN DEATH AND START A NEW LIFE UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME? IF SO, WOULD YOU REVEAL HIS PAST TO HIS UNWITTING NEW FAMILY AND/OR RECOMMEND HIM FOR PROMOTION?

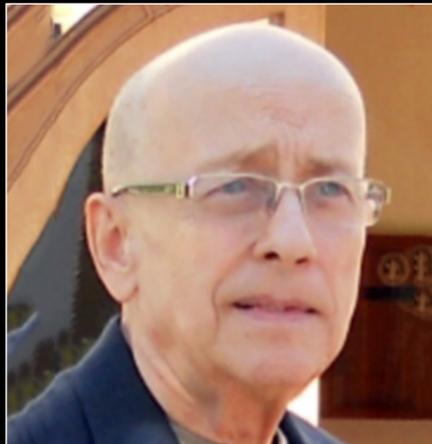
• WHY DOESN'T WILLIS DO SOMETHING ABOUT HIS MONOBROW?



ALAN 2016

In Memoriam

Robert J. Bray

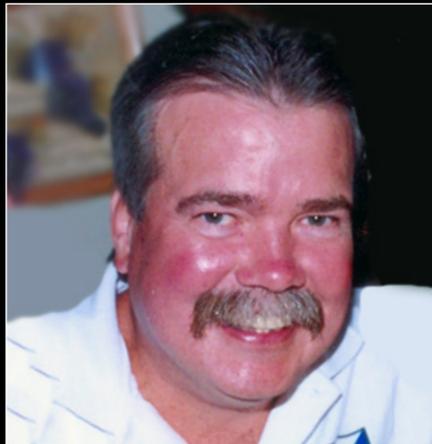


Robert J. Bray, 74, a retired FS information management specialist, died June 4 at his home in Chandler, Ariz. He joined the Department in 1990 and was first assigned to Abidjan and then Nairobi. He worked for many years in Washington, D.C., before his last posting to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico. He retired soon after that assignment in 2007. In his free time, he enjoyed woodworking and photography.



In Memoriam

Mark Steven Buske



Mark Steven Buske, 65, a retired FS information management officer, died June 19 in Morrison, Ill., from complications of Fabry disease. He served in the Navy before joining the Department in 1976. His overseas posts included Rome, Niamey, San José, Bonn, Oslo, Berlin and Vienna, always accompanied on his journeys by his wife and son. In retirement since 2004, he enjoyed talking back to TV news pundits, watching sports and being entertained by the antics of the animals that inhabited his backyard.



In Memoriam

Ray Caldwell



Ray Caldwell, 73, a retired FSO with the rank of ambassador, died June 12 in Falls Church, Va. After serving in the Navy from 1964–1969, with tours in Antarctica and Vietnam, he joined the Department and was posted to Mexico and Spain. In Washington, D.C., he was U.S. representative to NATO on conventional arms control and deputy assistant secretary for political-military affairs. After retiring in 1999, he worked for the U.S. Institute of Peace. He took great pride in being a U.S. Youth Soccer Association coach for the Annandale, Va., boys' soccer a travel team, the Little River Scorpions.



In Memoriam

Jack Morray Carle



Jack Morray Carle, 88, a retired FSO, died June 23 from heart failure at his home in Alexandria, Va. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard at the end of World War II. In the mid-1950s, he joined the Department and was posted to Bremen, Germany, where he met and married his wife and lifelong companion, Gloria. She became a Foreign Service secretary and together they served at posts in East Pakistan, Romania, Australia, Turkey and again in Germany. After retiring in the late 1980s, he worked part-time on FOIA requests at State and enjoyed photography and spending time with family.



In Memoriam

Hortencia T. Gencalp



Hortencia T. Gencalp, 80, a retired FS office management specialist, died May 30 in Fort Worth, Texas, after a long illness. She joined the Department in 1964, and her overseas posts included Buenos Aires, Ankara, Brussels, Manila, Tehran, Bonn, Vienna, Tirana, Helsinki, Madrid and Sofia. She retired in 2002.



In Memoriam

Claude William LaSalle II



Claude William LaSalle II, 82, a retired FSO, died June 11 in Washington, D.C. He was a college professor and Fulbright fellow in Czechoslovakia and Romania in the late 1960s before joining USIA. His overseas posts, as cultural attaché and public affairs officer, included India, Indonesia, the Netherlands and Zaire. In retirement, he continued to be a voracious consumer of books, travel, fine food and wine, and new experiences. He was active in several philanthropies.



In Memoriam

Dale L. Maki



Dale L. Maki, 65, a retired FSO, died May 28 at his home in Willis, Texas. With degrees in entomology, he joined the USDA in 1976 and worked for the Foreign Agricultural Service at overseas posts in Mexico, Guatemala, China and Panama. He retired to the Houston area in 2009 and took up a volunteer advocacy position with Texas CASA. He also became a certified interpreter and court mediator.



In Memoriam

Charles A. “Chuck” McGinley



Charles A. “Chuck” McGinley, 96, a retired FSO, died May 24 in his home in Tucson, Ariz. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1951. His posts included the Philippines, Libya, Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan and Australia. He retired in 1980 and self-published his memoirs on the lighter side of diplomacy, “Before Noon.”



In Memoriam

Jack C. Miklos



Jack C. Miklos, 89, a retired FSO, died June 16 at his home in San Francisco, Calif. He earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart in the Asian-Pacific Theater during World War II before joining the Department and serving in the Foreign Service for 36 years. During his diplomatic career he was posted in Yokohama, Tangier, Istanbul, Nice, Bombay, Colombo and twice in Tehran, where he was DCM during the Pahlavi regime. Before retiring, he was deputy assistant secretary for Near East affairs.



In Memoriam

Thomas J. O'Donnell

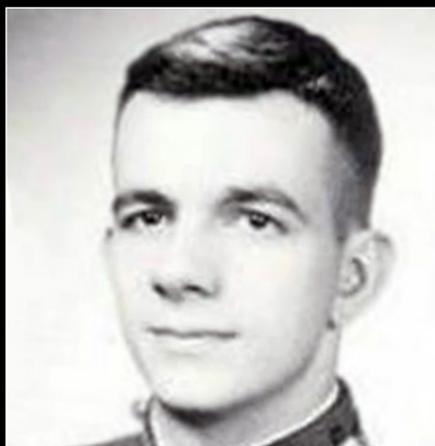


Thomas J. O'Donnell, 82, a retired FSO, died June 3 of respiratory and heart failure in Tucson, Ariz. He joined the Department in 1962 and was posted to Montevideo, Berlin, Managua, London and Brasilia, where he served as chargé. He helped Nicaragua recover from its devastating earthquake in 1972 and, several years later, was the ranking U.S. diplomat sent into President Somoza's bunker to urge him to leave the country. A lifelong bachelor, after retirement in 1987 he moved to Arizona to reunite with his mother and sisters and 12 nieces and nephews.



In Memoriam

Peter G. Schmeelk



Peter G. Schmeelk, 73, a retired FSO, died June 16 of cancer in Arlington, Va. He served in the Army for 25 years before joining the Department in 1985. His overseas posts included Caracas, San Salvador, Bucharest and Guatemala City. In Washington, D.C., after 9/11, he worked in the Office of International Security Operations on preparations for the Afghanistan and Iraq interventions. He retired in 2008 and continued as a military analyst on contract for the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.



In Memoriam

Jean Wilkowski



Jean Wilkowski, 96, a retired FSO and the first woman to serve as a U.S. Ambassador to Africa (Zambia), died July 27 in Bethesda, Md. She joined the Department in 1944, served in the Caribbean during World War II and for much of her 35-year career specialized in protecting and promoting U.S. trade and investment interests. Her posts included Paris, Milan, Rome, Santiago, Bogotá, Tegucigalpa and Geneva. She received six honorary degrees and is the only woman to be awarded DACOR's Foreign Service Cup. She authored the book "Abroad for Her Country: Tales of a Pioneer Woman Ambassador in the U.S. Foreign Service" (2008).



End State



Colorful rental boats surround a dock at Phewa Lake in Pokhara, Nepal.
Photo by Sharada Prasad CS

