Attachment 2 – Co-Chair Carol Peasley – Welcoming Comments

UAA Co-Chair Carol Peasley opened the meeting by welcoming the alumni present as well as USAID young professionals and other guests. She announced that the goal of reaching at least 300 contributing members had been exceeded. The formal Report to Members that details 2016 activities and preliminary 2017 plans is now posted on the UAA website for review and comment. A separate survey will be sent out in January seeking members’ views on future priorities so that final 2017 plans and budget may be put in place.

Carol urged members to make their annual contribution by the end of February each year to assist the Board in its planning. She also asked us to contact former colleagues who may not know about UAA, stressing the broad eligibility for membership which the Board has further expanded to include spouses and partners of deceased members as associate members.

Carol thanked all of the committee members who made 2016 so successful and emphasized that everything the UAA does is the result of work by volunteers. She then reviewed the key Committees and the opportunities they offer:

* The **Public Outreach Committee** needs a new co-chair. This year it facilitated a USAID-conducted web-based training session on current USAID priorities and media tips for alumni interested in public speaking. It is now also working with USAID/LPA to reach out to alumni located in the Atlanta and Los Angeles areas – where two new USAID positions have been located to help USAID with recruitment and outreach. The Bibliography of USAID Alumni Publications is updated on an on-going basis; speaking opportunities were arranged for four alumni authors in the last twelve months.
* The **Strengthening USAID Committee** worked with USAID in 2016 to evaluate the UAA mentorship program, which pairs alumni volunteers with officers serving in USAID missions. Three dozen mentor-mentee pairs were active in 2016, and a new mentoring cohort will begin in November. Please contact **Jerry Wood, Jose Garzon or David Cohen** to become a mentor or committee member.
* The **Development Issues Committee** organized an array of interesting presentations and discussions on international development, primarily at the DACOR Bacon House, but also in collaboration with the Wilson Center and IFPRI. The committee’s “Perspectives” section on the website has continued to enable members to submit short essays and comment on development issues. The committee also organizes well-attended “book group” sessions. Please see **Jim Fox or Steve Giddings** to join this committee.
* The **Membership Committee** continues to bring new members to the UAA and to sponsor social activities in the winter, spring, and summer. The Board has recently reduced the recommended contribution level for alumni living outside of the DC area. Please see **Nancy Tumavick or Frank Almaguer** with ideas on expanding membership, particularly of former FSNs and non-FS alumni.
* The **Finance and Administration Committee** has continued to strengthen UAA systems, including management of legal reporting and insurance requirements. Use of the website has increased by about 20 percent over the prior year. Ven Suresh continues to do a great job as our part-time Administrative Assistant. Please see **George Hill or Rob Sonenthal** if you would like to volunteer; also, **David Cohen** would appreciate your help with the website.
* Finally, we created the **USAID History Committee** this past year. We are still seeking foundation and private funding to match the over $170,000 pledged by UAA members last year and would welcome any ideas from members on possible additional sources of support. **Alex Shakow** chairs this committee.
* While disappointed that we are not further along on the History Project, we are pleased that USAID has just entered into a new cooperative agreement with the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) to conduct, over the next two years, 50 oral history interviews of USAID alumni. UAA will be working with ADST on this – stay tuned for more information by email.
* Carol’s last point also related to history. Jim Harold of the Development Experience Clearing House (DEC) at USAID has urged UAA members to submit to him old USAID print and digital documents for scanning and inclusion in the historical archives. Submit electronic materials to <http://dec.usaid.gov>. You may also call DEC at 202-712-0579 for more assistance.