



USAID Alumni Association

March 2017 UAA Newsletter

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming UAA Events

Friday, March 10 - 11:30-2:00 - Development Dialogue at DACOR - "**2017 Prospects - New Challenges - Corruption, Foreign Aid and Security.**" A co-founder of Transparency International, **Frank Vogl** has been engaged with global economics, banking, governance and anti-corruption efforts for more than 40 years, as a journalist (London Times, Reuters), World Bank Director of Public Affairs, an anti-corruption civil society leader, and a top level adviser to financial institutions.

Thursday, March 16, 2017 at 2:00 P.M. - Meeting of the UAA Development Issues Committee in the conference room of the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) located at 1889 F St, N.W. Guest speaker will be **Sarah Rose** of the Center for Global Development who will lead a discussion on country ownership.

Friday, March 31, 2017 - Noon The UAA Economic Growth & Institutional Development book group will hold its next meeting on the **topic of the economics of fragile states.** The leading **discussant will be Mike Crosswell.** The session will be held at the Circle Bistro Restaurant Washington Circle N.W. To reserve a space, please contact **Juan Buttari** at jbuttari@verizon.net. See the summary of February review below.

Sunday, May 21 - 5-7 pm - Save the date! UAA Spring Reception will take place at the home of Alex and Pat Shakow who have graciously agreed to host again this year.

Saturday, July 22, 2017 - Save the date! Fifth Annual UAA Summer Picnic will be held again this year at Fort Hunt in Alexandria, Virginia.

New on USAIDalumni.org

- **Obituaries:** There have been a number of additions to the [In Memoriam](#) page.
- In the [Forum](#), see: 1) Joe Ryan's recent addition to his posting on Development Assistance History, 2) an Agency notice on the retirement of Susan Reichle and the appointment of a new USAID Counselor, and 3) a notice from the Acting Administrator on the visit of SecState Tillerson to USAID.
- In [Articles](#), read pieces on: 1) Fareed Zakaria's thoughts on the key nature of diplomacy and development in achieving US security goals, 2) a Republican official's views on cutting defense and development budgets to fund military increases, 3) Alex Thier's assessment of the costs of cutting the foreign aid budget, 4) the impact of a large aid reduction on famines in Africa, 5) an assessment of the nature and impact of a large foreign aid cut, 6) a letter to Congress from 121 retired generals urging the avoidance of a large reduction in

the diplomacy/aid budget, 7) op ed thoughts from Raj Shah and Michael Gerson on the national security consequences of cutting foreign aid, 8) speculation re: two possible USAID Administrator candidates, 9) Trump's apparent continued support for Bush's PEPFAR, 10) Bill and Melinda Gates' comments on Warren Buffet's best investment, 11) a letter to Trump urging continued support for girls and women, and 12) former A/AID Gayle Smith's new job.

- At a February [UAA Development Dialogue at DACOR](#), five-time USAID Mission Director and Ambassador Jonathan Addleton presented the story of his period as the Senior Civilian Representative for Southern Afghanistan. [Hear the audio of his talk and the Q&A.](#)
- To make your 2017 membership payment, please click [here](#).
- In [Jobs and Volunteer Opportunities](#), one new job offering has been posted.

Do you have news, an article or event you would like to share? Please send it to office@usaidalumni.org or, better still, post it on the [Forum](#).

Looking for someone with a USAID alumni background and skills to hire or as a volunteer? If you would like to post a job or volunteer opportunity, please email us at office@usaidalumni.org, Attn: Jobs/Volunteers.

Winterfest event

The February weather was balmy enough the weekend of February 11 to entice a group of over 80 Alumni and guests to attend the third Winterfest hosted once again this year at the home of Dave Eckerson and Connie Hansen. All of us appreciated the gracious hospitality with a wonderful assortment of finger foods and a specially selected tasting of wines and beers. Among other new participants at this event were two recently retired USAID Mission Directors, Ambassador Jonathan Addleton and his wife Fiona as well as Dennis Weller and his wife Debbie. In town from their residence in Bend, Oregon were Jerry Wein and Martita Marx who managed a cameo appearance.

We would like to continue this UAA tradition and seek a venue for next year. If you are able to offer your residence, with costs reimbursed by the UAA, please contact Nancy Tumavick at tumavick@aol.com.

USAID Global Development Lab Seeks Volunteer Technical Experts

The USAID Global Development Lab (GDL) is launching a new service, Innovation Matchmaking, to assist field Missions and their partners to more easily identify and integrate new innovations into their programs, as well as to access technical advisory support to help pilot, replicate, and/or scale up helpful innovations. To support this service, GDL is **recruiting a network of volunteer technical experts** who can serve as **Applied Innovation Expert Advisers to be listed in a Brain Trust Roster**. These experts would advise Missions and GDL on innovations related to their sector or mission management expertise. The expectation is that maximum effort for participating would be 1-3 requests per quarter with roughly 1-2 hours of effort per request.

Requests to network experts are likely to include: * Identifying current innovations in their fields of expertise * Sharing lessons learned regarding innovations with which they have knowledge/experience * Reviewing and providing feedback on summaries of innovations * Participating in networking activities with innovators in their sector. For the full version of the notice of this opportunity, click [here](#).

Anyone interested in volunteering for this service, please contact Shelie Miller, LAB/CDI, (202) 712-0297, shmillier@usaid.gov

Reminder of Job Opportunities

Don't forget to check our UAA website under "[Get Involved: Job & Volunteer Opportunities](#)" for some interesting listings of work for which our alumni members are being sought by USAID.

Report of UAA February 2017 Book Group Discussion

The UAA Economic Growth & Institutional Development book group is into its second year. On February 17, some 16 Alumni participated in the UAA book group discussion focused on "Why Growth Matters: How Economic Growth in India Reduced Poverty and Lessons for Other Developing Countries" by J. Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya. The presentation was made by Roberta Van Haften.

The discussion centered around the book's emphasis on the need to promote economic growth to reduce poverty, the constraints that hindered development in India, progress made and current challenges, and the sequence of reforms proposed. In light of the importance that recent literature has attached to institutions, it is noteworthy that the authors underlined that while at independence India had some strong institutions compared to other newly independent countries (e.g., good civil service and an independent judiciary), a misguided economic policy orientation led to low productivity and growth significantly below potential. Essentially, growth and poverty alleviation were constrained by extensive controls over private investment and production, overexpansion of the public sector, the promotion of autarky, and restriction of foreign investment. This situation started to change dramatically in the 1990s, when the country opened up to international trade and investment, investment licensing was dismantled, and the country stopped reserving labor-intensive production exclusively to small firms.

While today India is growing slightly faster than China and poverty is down, it still faces the challenges of: a highly inflexible labor market that continues to be distorted by new legislation under the guise of social protection; the absence of modern bankruptcy laws; a poorly functioning land market; inadequate physical infrastructure; very weak higher education; highly protected agriculture; and substantial poverty pockets. The discussion highlighted that a recent report by the CATO Institute confirms and updates the book's main points, and that much of what can be said of India's experience applies as well in other underdeveloped areas of the world.

Alumni Profiles - Regina Dennis - Nana

Regina Dennis-Nana survives life challenges. Her first trip to Africa was by train and boat from Brussels, where she had been studying French. Later, as a graduate student, she was a victim of sexual abuse, took the young white wrestler to court, sat on the witness stand for three hours, and saw justice prevail with an all-white jury and judge. She has survived four car accidents in Africa.



Still, nothing prepared her for the devastating 7.0 earthquake that shook Haiti on January 12, 2010. On that evening, she was working in the embassy and heard the Marine guard's voice announce: "Get away from the windows; this is not a drill." The earth shook; the Embassy's ceiling and platforms fell, and papers flew. This experience brought home the value of appreciating and living each day to the fullest.

Regina worked for 20 years as a Development Anthropologist, focusing on food production and health care among agro-pastoral societies. Starting her USAID FSO career in 2001, she served in Nigeria, Ghana, Haiti and Guinea. In this capacity, she oversaw Agency policies and procedures to design, monitor and evaluate, budget for agricultural, health care, democracy and governance and educational programs.

Retirement in 2014 has enabled her to concentrate on projects she long had on the back burner. Settling in St. Louis, she renovated a 137 year-old Victorian house in an old neighborhood that is in the process of bouncing back. The home has become a meeting place for family and guests from around the world as well as for community events. Serving as a Division "F" Governor for Toastmasters International has smoothed her transition into St. Louis area. Regina also maintains an active membership in the Nimba Toastmasters club in Conakry, Guinea via Skype.

In 2015, she returned to Cameroon both for sorrowful and happy family events: the death of her husband and the wedding of a nephew, whom she promoted to become a medical doctor. In 2015, she traveled to France to witness the christening of a grandchild, and in March 2016, to Senegal on a "weekend" trip to attend an extravagant wedding for a godson. Most recently, she welcomed the arrival of her fourth grandchild.

For the rest of 2017, she anticipates getting involved in her community with gardening projects and serving as a role model for youth interested in international careers. She also plans to promote trade and business with Africa and write books. Taking care of elderly family members is a time consuming, but necessary, element of her life. All in all, she is enjoying her retirement.

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