



# USAID Alumni Association

## May 2017 UAA Newsletter

### Mark your Calendars for Upcoming UAA Events

**Friday, May 12, 2017 - Noon** The UAA Economic Growth & Institutional Development book group will hold its next meeting on **Thomas Friedman's** book "**Thank You for Being Late**". The leading **discussant will be Jim Fox**. 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](mailto:jbuttari@verizon.net).

**Sunday, May 21 - 5-7 pm** - Alex and Pat Shakow are again hosting the annual Spring Reception. We hope you will join us for this special social occasion in a lovely garden setting. Plenty of food and drinks for all. This event is free of charge to Alumni and their spouse or partner. See below for details. Please respond today!!

**Wednesday, June 21, 12 noon - 2 pm** **UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue and DACOR's Newberry Cultural Series** co-host **Ms. Marina Djabbarzade**, World Bank Consultant on cultural heritage projects, will speak on "**Harnessing Cultural Resources for Socio-Economic Development**".

**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:** The [In Memoriam](#) page has several new entries.
- In [Papers Recently Published by USAID Alumni](#), Barbara Crane and Elizabeth Maguire, provide cogent commentary on the threat to foreign aid posed by the Trump Administration, with special attention to what is at stake in policies affecting women's reproductive health and rights.
- In [Articles](#), read about: 1) a CRS analysis of things for the Administration to weigh in formulating an aid to Africa policy, 2) the case for keeping USAID and State separate, 3) a primer on foreign aid, 4) the continued under-representation of women leaders around the world, 5) the nervous environment in State re. restructuring, 6) damage already done to the foreign assistance budget, 7) the MFAN case for foreign aid, and 8) how the war on poverty is still not ended.
- In [Web Links](#), view a State Dept. graphic that clearly demonstrate elevated risk levels to those who provide humanitarian and development assistance.

Do you have news, an article or event you would like to share? Please send it to [office@usaidalumni.org](mailto: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](mailto:office@usaidalumni.org), Attn: Jobs/Volunteers.

## RSVP Today for the UAA Spring Reception May 21, 2017

UAA Annual Spring Reception

**Sunday, May 21, 2017**  
**5:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

The Residence of Alex and Pat Shakow  
4001 Dresden St. - Chevy Chase View  
Kensington, Maryland 20895

Alex and Pat Shakow are again hosting the annual Spring Reception. We hope you will join us for this special social occasion in a lovely garden setting. Plenty of food and drinks for all. This event is free of charge to Alumni and their spouse or partner.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP as soon as possible and no later than Thursday, May 18 to [office@usaidalumni.org](mailto:office@usaidalumni.org) and copy [ashakow@comcast.net](mailto:ashakow@comcast.net) - directions will be sent.

## UAA Associate Membership

The UAA reminds Alumni that last October the Board approved an amendment to the Bylaws to establish an Associate Membership category. The Board also approved a related proposal that widows, widowers, and former spouses or partners of USAID Alumni who were eligible for UAA membership will now be eligible to apply for Associate Membership. The annual Associate membership fee will be \$25.

The amended Bylaws now read, "Associate Membership is an eligibility category established to include individuals who do not meet the specific criteria for full UAA membership but who otherwise have provided service and support to USAID, remunerated or not, over a period of time which indicates commitment to the Agency's objectives. Associate Members do not have voting privileges and are not eligible to serve on the UAA Board, but may directly participate on any of the established committees." To view the bylaws in their entirety, [click here](#) .

We hope that many others will join our ranks as Associate Members in the coming months and actively participate in the UAA. Please share this information with those who are eligible to take advantage of this new category and encourage their participation.

## Seeking Manager of UAA LinkedIn

UAA is seeking a Manager of the UAA LinkedIn Account. This is an excellent volunteer opportunity for a member to become more actively engaged in the work of the Association whether or not you live in the D.C. area. UAA established its LinkedIn account about 5 years ago and has attracted more than 1,000 current and former USAID staff, including many FSNs. This volunteer work, which takes only a small amount of time each day and requires minimal geek skills, can be done remotely. The incumbent manager is available to train and assist. For further information please contact Tish Butler at [tish.butler@mac.com](mailto:tish.butler@mac.com).

## Announcing the 2017 UAA "ALUMNI OF THE YEAR" Awards Program

The deadline is fast approaching to nominate someone (or yourself) for the 2017 "Alumni of the Year" award(s) that will be announced at the UAA's Annual General Meeting on November 3. The deadline for nomination submissions is Monday, July 31.

The "Alumni of the Year" awards recognize and celebrate new paths taken by USAID alumni to provide service to their communities and improve the lives of others at home and abroad. There are impressive contributions among our alumni community waiting to be recognized by our fellow alumni. Don't wait until the last minute to share those stories. All nominees, including the 2017 winner(s), will be featured in future editions of the monthly UAA Newsletter.

For full details about the Award and how to make nominations, click [here](#).

## Alumni Profiles - Three USAID Coaches

The USAID Coaching program started in 2000 with the first New Entry Professional (NEP) class. Coaches assist new FSOs from entry orientation through departure to post. They work with them on their Individual Development Plans, self-assessments of the skill areas needing to be mastered, and help direct them to places in the Agency where they can acquire needed skills. Other areas of support include advising on AEF preparation, negotiating the overseas assignment process, and advising on working within the Agency's culture, remaining neutral regarding the Agency's and employee's interests. They also participate in the interviews for selecting new employees.

In recent years, UAA members have supplemented the coaches by serving as "mentors" to officers overseas. This successful effort has speeded the adjustment of new officers to USAID's often unique ways of doing business.

The present coaching cadre consists of Jonathan Sperling, John Pielemeier, Bob Dakan, Jinny Sewell and Linda Whitlock Brown, all retired foreign service officers. Below are brief profiles of three of the coaches.

**Jonathan Sperling** started with USAID in October 1966 and was in the crowd TIC'd out in 1994. For 24 years, he served as program officer in Kenya, Thailand, Liberia, Indonesia, Tunisia and Pakistan. Since retirement, he has consulted with missions on project design, evaluation, strategies, and program work. Experience in the Baltics, Caucasus, Balkans, South Asia, WB/G, Sri Lanka and Colombia served him well in preparing new entry folks for life at USAID. He has been coaching since 2001, suffering through myriad hiring mechanisms.



Jonathan describes coaching as a dream job.

The new entrants are enthusiastic, experienced, and committed. Not a week passes that he does not learn something from one of his new colleagues. Past "coachees," too, often ask for advice on bidding or dealing with a supervisor. Jonathan especially likes having a captive audience for the many war stories lodged in the memory of a USAID geezer.

While the future of the coaching program is uncertain, being able to help shape the future leadership of the Agency has been deeply satisfying.



**John Pielemeier**, at age 50, was also TIC'd out in 1994. Building on his 24 years as a Peace Corps Volunteer and USAID FSO, he then managed his own consulting practice, leading project design or evaluation teams in environment, health, and agriculture projects and providing management advice and training for USAID and a host of acronymical consulting firms. In the early-2000s he managed the TAACS program at CEDPA, leading to his recruitment in 2004 as a USAID coach. John has primarily coached new Program/Project Development officers but also has coached over 180 environment, agriculture, education, health and executive officers. During the DLI orientation programs,

John's wife, Nancy Pielemeier, joined him in presentations to employees (and often their spouses) on "Two Career Couples and Raising Kids Overseas".

Working with new entry officers has been modestly demanding and greatly rewarding - hmmm, perhaps the perfect job. John keeps in touch with many of his former "coachees," congratulating them on their promotions, transfers, babies and - sometimes - early departures from USAID and still providing coaching counsel when requested.

**Bob Dakan**, a retired FSO, uses over 37 years of managing development programs in Asia and Africa as the basis for his Coaching career. A speaker of Indonesian, Lao, and Thai, his comfort in working in different cultures has enabled him to guide new entrants to USAID through its often-impenetrable culture. Bob, who was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Indonesia (1963-65), began in USAID as a program/economic development officer, gaining supervisory experience in a series of assignments in Asia. He retired in 2000, having served as Mission Director (Belize) and Office Director in the LAC Bureau.



Since USAID, he worked for several development partners in Asia, but after the 2004 tsunami, USAID called him back to Indonesia to provide support services for the construction of the 175-km Aceh Road.

Bob is married to Maya Dakan and, when not coaching USAID employees, enjoys their four grandchildren.

**[Make Your 2017 UAA Membership Contribution](#)**

**USAID Alumni Association**

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