



USAID Alumni Association

October 2019 Newsletter

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming UAA Events

Monday, October 7, 10:00 am to noon - **Rev. David Beckmann**, longtime President of Bread for the World, World Food Prize laureate, Founder and President of the Alliance to End Hunger, and the first Co-Chairman of the Mobilizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), will speak on "U.S. Politics Now and International Development" at a **UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue** at 1801 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006. David will open a very timely conversation about development assistance, the elections, and advocacy strategies, all with an eye to finding the best ways to help sustain a generation of progress against poverty. Reservations are required TODAY by clicking [here](#).

Friday, October 11, 2:00 p.m. - **Alexis Bonnell**, USAID Chief Innovation Officer, will lead a discussion on "**Innovation at USAID**" at the next **Development Issues Committee** meeting which has been rescheduled from late September to October 11. Ms. Bonnell was one of the founding senior members of the Global Development Lab. A description of her distinguished career can be found [here](#). If you have not already done so and plan to attend the meeting, please let Jim Fox (jameswfox@cox.net) and Steve Giddings (sgiddings5@gmail.com) know no later than Wednesday, October 9. The meeting will be held at Arizona State University, 8th floor, 1800 I (Eye) Street, N.W.

Wednesday, October 23, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. - The **UAA Book Club** will meet at the BISTRO 1521 Restaurant, 900 N. Glebe Rd., Arlington, VA 22203, which is near the Ballston Metro Stop. Jim Fox will lead a discussion of Cass R. Sunstein, *How Change Happens*, 2019, (274 pages). Please let Stu Callison (stucallison@yahoo.com) know if you plan to participate.

Friday, October 25, 2019 - **UAA Annual General Meeting** will be held at the Center for Global Development (CGD), 2055 L Street, NW, 5th floor, Washington, D.C. See detailed information below.

Monday, December 9, 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. - **Homi Kharas**, Interim Vice President and Director of Global Economy and Development at the Brookings Institution, will speak at DACOR about his new book, *Leave No One Behind: Time for Specifics on the Sustainable Development Goals*. He will offer practical ideas for transforming a slogan into effective actions which, if implemented, will make it possible to reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

New on USAIDalumni.org

- **Obituaries:** The [In Memoriam](#) page contains two new entries.
- In [Articles](#), take a look at some intriguing new items: 1) President Trump announced to the UN General Assembly that the US would redirect aid money to countries that agree with his administration's policies; 2) The fate of the Trump administration's foreign assistance review has been a lingering question for the US aid community for months; 3) Current and former federal employees and military personnel will have more options starting Sunday when withdrawing money from their Thrift Savings Plan accounts; 4) A number of British aid experts questioned the details of the proposed 1.5% (real terms) increase to DFID's budget for the year

2020-21 fearing it will be transferred to other departments; 5) With Congressional approval for almost all of Administrator Green's reforms, a number of current senior officials have been designated to occupy new positions when the organizational transformation moves forward; 6) After standing down in a battle with Congress over \$4 billion in foreign assistance cuts, the White House is still slow-walking funds for those same programs in a move that threatens their full implementation, according to two sources; 7) John Allen, former Marine 4-star general and current President of the Brookings Institute, explains that today's development challenges are many and require the sort of U.S. leadership that projects American values and works in concert with our longstanding allies.

- The [Jobs and Volunteer Opportunities](#) page offers four opportunities for USAID alums.
- Want to **check if you paid your 2019 UAA membership contribution**? Easy to do. Just click [here](#).

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.

Mentors Needed for UAA Mentoring Program

Through the UAA/USAID Mentoring Program, alumni have an opportunity to participate in a challenging but highly rewarding program that contributes to USAID by strengthening its field-based staff. The program has been expanding over several years and now includes partners across the Agency. Through this program, UAA helps develop the next generation of Agency leaders at all levels, from new officers to Mission Directors. To date eight cohorts have resulted in over 100 mentor/mentee pairs.

The level of commitment is modest and determined by the mentor-mentee pair, but usually consists of an hour's conversation once every one to two weeks. USAID is very pleased with results of the program to date. This is a rewarding and enjoyable activity and will keep you engaged and up to speed with what is happening in the field and the evolution of Agency policy. Excellent training is provided to the mentors and the mentees at the start of the program.

We sincerely hope that those of you who are interested will respond by clicking [here](#) to fill out your mentor profile. For further information please contact the program co-chairs: Rose Rakas at rosetrakas@gmail.com or Roberta Mahoney at robertacairo@hotmail.com.

UAA Annual General Meeting

The 2019 UAA Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on **October 25, 2019, at the Center for Global Development (CGD)** headquarters on the 5th floor, 2055 L Street, Washington, DC. This year's meeting highlights include:

- A panel discussion on: "*Democratic Governance: How do USAID Missions Overcome Obstacles, Achieve Results, and Navigate the Inevitable Landmines?*" featuring **Tom Carothers**, Senior Vice-President, the Carnegie Foundation, and UAA members **Chris Crowley, Beth Hogan and Susan Reichle**;
- **Peter McPherson**, President of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and former Administrator, USAID, in conversation with **Alex Shakow**, UAA; and
- Discussion on foreign aid and the 2020 elections with **Derek Gianino**, National Engagement Director, US Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC)
- Comments by USAID Deputy Administrator Bonnie Glick.

The [agenda](#) also includes alumni awards and time to catch up with old friends.

Please [click here](#) to register for the AGM if you have not done so already.

Please note that members will need to vote for Board Members electronically in advance. No voting will take place at the AGM. To be eligible to vote Alumni need to be contributing members for 2019. Note that contributing membership offers many UAA benefits, such as attendance at no cost at several social events throughout the year and the annual general meeting, voting privileges to select Board members, nominating your friends and colleagues for the Alumni of the Year awards, and the opportunity to volunteer to help advance the UAA goals. If not a 2019 contributing member, you may make a 2019 contribution by clicking [here](#).

For **voting and information on the UAA Board slate of candidates**, please click [here](#).

Please click [here](#) to read the UAA's 2019 Progress Report, and click [here](#) to read the Draft Strategic Plan for 2020 for which we welcome your comments either before or during the AGM.

Seeking Volunteers for UAA Website Management Training

With David Cohen's long and selfless stint at the helm of the UAA Website tapering down, Tish Butler has volunteered to try to fill his very large shoes. However, as we move into the future, it makes sense that content and management of the website be shared, rather than leaning on only one valiant volunteer. Please consider offering your computer know-how to David and Tish, for training and future involvement in this important endeavor. Word Press is not hard to learn! Email David (dacohen@yahoo.com) and/or Tish (tish.butler@mac.com) if you have questions or would like to join in.

UAA Book Club

At the September 18th meeting of the UAA Book Club, Jim Elliott and Clarence Zuvekas led a discussion of Mario Vargas Llosa's book, *La Ilamada de la Tribu (Call of the Tribe)*, Alfaguara, 2018. Jim and Clarence prepared a written review and discussion questions in English (the book is published in Spanish.) The discussion focused on the different meanings of the "call of the tribe" and the "spirit of the tribe." The siren-song *call of the tribe* is identifiable with nationalism run amok—as under Kaiser Wilhelm or, even worse, a Hitler. The *spirit of the tribe* animates political "discussion" on the internet which leads to "no-compromise, double-down" factionalism. It can open fissures within a country that sets people with near identical languages (e.g., Serbs and Croats) against one another. Copies of the papers on this very interesting scholarly book will soon be posted on the Book Club Reviews section of the UAA website and will be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Public Outreach

The UAA continues some important public outreach efforts for both here in the Washington, D.C. area and around the country. Two such noteworthy activities are the following:

To continue reaching out to the UAA members around the country, the Public Outreach and the Membership Committees met in September to consider options for offering help to interested alumni members around the country to organize themselves geographically for social, educational and advocacy purposes about U.S. foreign assistance in the coming year. Stay tuned: More to come this Autumn.

We are helping mobilize alumni guest speakers to lead seminars for medical students of George Washington University's School of Medical and Public Health Sciences. Topics will cover a wide range of healthcare and service delivery challenges in the developing world. If you are interested in participating, please contact Jim Bever (bentonboy@gmail.com), Beth Hogan (bethhogan123@gmail.com), or Joy Riggs-Perla (jriggsperla@yahoo.com).

A Tribute to David Cohen and George Hill – In recognition of their service to the UAA

The upcoming Annual General Meeting marks not only the occasion to reflect on UAA achievements and plans going forward but also to transition to new UAA leadership in the organization. This is a most noteworthy year. Two individuals are stepping down after generously serving for almost the entire life of the UAA: David Cohen and George Hill. Both of these outstanding members have held major management responsibility for all the behind-the-scenes critical functions on which the membership and UAA operations depend.

David began working with the UAA as Co-chair of the Strengthen USAID Committee, launching the Mentoring Program with a pilot in the USAID Europe and Eurasia Bureau and later in other parts of the Agency. He remains engaged with the Committee and this very successful Mentoring Program where he has multiple USAID mentees. While serving simultaneously on the Executive Committee, David became aware of the need to improve the all but moribund UAA website. Along with Gary Merritt and a contracted webmaster, they designed and implemented a full re-make of the website that he has managed for the past nine years, both for content and technical needs. He has been responsible single-handedly for identifying and posting all of the organization's membership information, archives, photos, linkage to development articles, calendar and, yes, even the obituaries. A former Mission Director turned techie! In addition to this awesome accomplishment, David coached the UAA Administrative Assistant and provided the Association's Executive Committee with his wisdom and well-appreciated wit. We are most grateful to David that he has volunteered to mentor the incoming Website Manager, Tish Butler, for as long as needed, which she has said would be 2022.

Likewise, early in UAA's existence, George Hill was elected to the Board and named to be Treasurer. He served in that position for two terms, after which the Board declared him the Financial Officer until he was eligible to resume his chair on the Board as Treasurer. That totals ten years of volunteer service to the UAA. We just could not let him go! In USAID Mission parlance, George has served simultaneously as Controller, Executive Officer and Contracting Officer over the UAA operating funds and, more recently, over the major History Project contributions. Although he and his wife, USAID retiree Pat Sommers, have moved to the Chester River shore in rural Maryland, we look forward to seeing them at UAA events, especially at the annual picnic since they provide the fire extinguisher and tape down the plastic table cloths!

We are truly grateful to both super-performing UAA members for their years of volunteer service.

Newsletter schedule

The next UAA newsletters of 2019 will be sent on **November 18** (covering the period October 8 to November 18 focused on post-AGM) and **January 6, 2020** (covering the November 19-December 31 year-end period). If you have any stories or events that you would like to share with your fellow alumni, please send the information along with a picture and caption of the event, date, and people shown to office@usaidalumni.org.

[Make your 2019 UAA Membership contribution here](#)

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