



USAID Alumni Association

April 2020 Newsletter

Message on Coronavirus from UAA Co-Chairs

We hope you and your families are safe and well during this extraordinary period of the COVID-19 pandemic. UAA's Executive Committee has aligned UAA activities to put the health of our members, families and community first, and we are complying with the directives and advice of the government and medical experts. This means that we have canceled, postponed, or arranged to hold all UAA events and meetings virtually into the near future. The UAA Book Club and the Development Issues Committee events are on hold through early April. UAA/DACOR events taking place at DACOR are also postponed until further notice. The Executive Committee and several other committees are meeting via conference call for the time being. We will reschedule activities whenever the restrictions are lifted and it is safe to do so. We will keep you informed. In the meantime, stay well!

Anne Aarnes and Nancy Tumavick

USAID Administrator Mark Green's Message to All Alumni

On the eve of his departure from USAID, Administrator Mark Green has just sent to the USAID Alumni Association a letter of appreciation for the services that we have all rendered. We wish him well in his new endeavor.

"Dear Valued Members of the USAID Alumni Association,

As we confront the challenge of COVID-19 at home and abroad, I want to reach out to highlight the investments the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has made throughout the years in global health security to prepare for a moment like this. All around the world, countries are using the tools you contributed to, and the capacity you helped build, in their fight against the virus. As challenging as the situation is, we would be in a worse position without the foundation you helped lay. That is an important part of our messaging, and one I want to bring to your attention....." Continue reading [here](#).

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming UAA Events

Please watch for emails announcing further details of the following events that may be, or already have been, postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic emergency.

POSTPONED. Wednesday, March 25, 2020, 1:00-3:00 p.m. -- During the **UAA Book Club** meeting, **Bobbie van Haeften** was scheduled to review and discuss **Daniel Markovits's** new book, *The Meritocracy Trap: How America's Foundational Myth Feeds Inequality, Dismantles the Middle Class, and Devours the Elite*. Members will be notified when the meeting is rescheduled.

POSTPONED. Thursday, April 2, 2020, 2:00-3:30 p.m. -- The **Development Issues Committee** planned to hold its bimonthly meeting on the formation and goals of the recently established Development Finance Corporation (DFC) with guest discussion leaders **Andrew Herscovitz**, newly appointed DFC Chief Development Officer (formerly Director of USAID's Power Africa initiative) and **Amanda Burke**, DFC Deputy Vice President, External Affairs. The meeting will be announced when confirmed with the DFC for later in April.

POSTPONED. Tuesday, April 14, 2020, 6:00-8:30 p.m. -- At a **UAA/Development Dialogue** dinner, **Henrietta Holsman Fore**, UNICEF Executive Director (and former USAID

Administrator), was scheduled again to discuss "From USAID Administrator to UNICEF Executive Director – Challenges and Opportunities." This event will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

POSTPONED. Sunday, May 17, 2020, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m – The **UAA Spring Reception**, which was to be hosted again this year by Alex and Patricia Shakow at their home in Chevy Chase View (Kensington), Maryland, regrettably must be postponed due to the coronavirus emergency. We hope it can be rescheduled at some later date.

Wednesday, August 12, 2020, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. – **Connie Carrino and Jeff Sharat** will host the **annual alumni picnic** in Vermont at Connie's home in Stowe, Vermont. For USAID alumni passing through Vermont this summer, you are invited to join the fun. If you can make it, please RSVP to Connie at cacarrino@gmail.com.

Saturday, September 12, 2020, 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. – **Summer Picnic** will be held at Fort Hunt Park, Alexandria, VA. Save the date: More details to come.

Friday, October 30, 2020, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – **Annual General Meeting** will be held at the Center for Global Development, Washington, DC. Save the date: More details to come.

New! on USAIDalumni.org

- **Obituaries:** The [In Memoriam](#) page has nine new obituaries of USAID colleagues including colleagues such as Eric Griffel, Diane Leach, Stephen Ives, Jr., Larry Smucker and Kenneth Wayne Beasley.
- **Articles:** You can read ten new articles, including pieces on: a snapshot of OFDA's percent of disaster declarations responded to within 72 hours; U.S. lawmakers publicly the Trump administration's FY 2021 foreign aid budget; fears mount as the Trump Administration guts USAID's Iraq presence; global health is not a substitute for U.S. domestic readiness or large-scale pandemic response; Mark Green's departure at USAID sparks debate about his successor; and as the coronavirus looms, the U.S. proceeds with a major reduction of aid to Yemen.
- **Job & Volunteer Opportunities:** New opportunities include: a number of FS Officer slots at USAID; USAID's Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (Performance Management Division) is seeking two retired Career Ministers to serve on the 2020 Senior FS Performance Board; the Navanti Group needs consultants for 7-week assignments in Management and Human Resources; and ADST seeks an Office Manager and Bookkeeper.
- **Winterfest:** The front page of the website has a brief piece (with pictures) on the February 9th Winterfest gathering at the home of Frank and Antoinette Almaguer.
- **Forum:** The Forum features four items focused on: the resignation of USAID Administrator Mark Green; Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and USAID; State Department Issues a Global "authorized departure" for certain USG personnel and family members; and a community interest piece on the Coronavirus and local grocery store accommodations for seniors (60 and over).
- **UAA Book Club and Development Issues Committee:** Meetings scheduled for late-March (Book Club) and mid-April (Development Issues Committee) have been postponed due to the Coronavirus emergency. New dates will be announced when confirmed.
- **Web Links:** Added to the WebLinks page is a piece on The Global Health Security Index – the first comprehensive assessment of global health security capabilities in 195 countries.

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. This is the spot for cross-talk and communication among our members.

Looking to post a job or volunteer opportunity, please email us at office@usaidalumni.org, Attn: Jobs/Volunteers.

USAID Foreign Service Hiring Push Continues

The UAA is pleased to assist USAID in its efforts to strengthen its human resource capacity, as appropriate. See below the latest update shared with us from USAID headquarters.

Congress has directed USAID to recruit and maintain a permanent Foreign Service workforce of 1,850 officers worldwide (H.R. 1865). Over the coming weeks and months, as recruiting, onboarding and assignment processes accelerate to meet this overall goal and specific backstop targets, the Agency anticipates potential short-term and long-term appointment, contract and/or volunteer opportunities to support the development of a new

cadre of officers. Interested USAID alumni should monitor USAID Alumni Association communications and other usual USAID announcement channels over the coming weeks for further details of specific opportunities.

2020 UAA Awards Program

In 2020, the UAA will continue to recognize significant contributions by USAID Alumni through its signature Alumni of the Year Awards. Since the inception of the Awards Program in 2014, the UAA has recognized and celebrated new paths taken by USAID alumni to provide service to their communities and to make lasting contributions to others at home and abroad.

For the Alumni of the Year awards, your help is requested in identifying individuals whose post-USAID activities are truly exemplary and highlight the quality of our alumni community. We ask each of you to consider nominating (or self-nominating) someone you know who is deserving of this recognition.

The Awards Committee will accept nominations for Alumni of the Year, beginning now until July 31, 2020. Send nominations electronically to: awards@usaidalumni.org. The award winners will be announced at the Annual General Meeting on October 30.

The 2020 UAA Awards Program guidance is provided on the UAA website. Please [click here](#) to view the guidance.

UAA 2020 Membership Survey Report

The 2020 Membership Survey was sent to everyone on February 23 for response by March 2. The UAA, as a voluntary organization, relies on the assistance and input of its members to make our programs and activities more relevant. For the 2020 survey, we received a good response – more than double that of last year – which will better inform us in improving your program. Once we have reviewed the many comments and suggestions, we will share with you the results of the survey later this month.

Our appreciation to all 187 respondents, especially to the 96 volunteers who indicated an interest in participating in multiple UAA activities. Their names have been shared with the chairs of the committees and programs for follow-up.

Call for Mentors for the 2020 Cohort of Payne Fellows

The Donald M. Payne Fellowship Program is now accepting expressions of interest for its volunteer mentoring program. If you are interested, please contact Maria Elena Vivas-House, Director of Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program, at maria.vivashouse@howard.edu. The Payne Fellowship is a USAID program, administered by Howard University, which seeks to attract and prepare outstanding individuals for careers as USAID Foreign Service Officers (FSO). Payne Fellows receive support for graduate school, professional development opportunities, and gain employment with the Agency in a rewarding career in the Foreign Service. This is not the UAA/USAID mentoring program, managed by UAA with USAID, for field-based FSOs. The Payne Fellow Mentoring Program is the result of strong collaboration between the UAA, USAID leaders, and Howard University staff. See details [here](#).

Public Outreach: Call for Stories for AFSA's "First Line of Defense Campaign"

After several weeks of self isolation, our guess is that you've completed your "to do list" of home projects, caught up on your reading, had your fill of Netflix binging and Zoom meetings. If you are looking for a way to punch through the boredom while simultaneously supporting UAA's mission, we have just the thing! Please consider contributing a short story (600 -1,000 words) to AFSA's "First Line of Defense Campaign." Those of you who are AFSA members already got a notice about this, or maybe read about it in the AFSA daily clips. But for those of you who haven't, this is a campaign to collect short essays from current and retired employees of all foreign service agencies that demonstrate how our work directly benefits the health, economy and national security of the United States. We believe that UAA alumni will undoubtedly have some of the most compelling stories to tell given the nature of our work. When foreign assistance remains under threat, perhaps more so now and into the future given the strains on the U.S. economy, this is an opportunity to help Americans understand that foreign assistance is not a give-away but rather an investment in our collective well-being. For more details, [click here](#).

And please ignore the March 20th submission date. The window is still open and will remain so for the foreseeable future. We look forward to reading your stories!

Alumni Profile: Barbara Bennett



Barbara Bennett with great nephews and niece

Barbara Bennett **retired** in 2016 after a 45-year career with USAID. She came from a small town in southern Virginia for a management intern position in a relatively new, temporary agency in Washington, DC. She had studied world history and planned to teach but positions in that field were scarce. When the offer came from USAID, her parents were horrified at the thought of their daughter in the big city by herself! Her uncle advised her to take it as the federal government at that time was the best place for women. Barbara came to love her work and her new city.

At work, Barbara found her niche in the legislative affairs office after a year on Capitol Hill with the House Appropriations Committee. Her primary focus was global health, and she played a key role in the establishment of the President's Malaria Initiative, the Neglected Tropical Diseases program, and the Pandemic Office. The current pandemic brings back the rewarding but scary work in addressing avian influenza, H1N1 and Ebola. She retired as Director of Legislative Affairs.

Meantime, she fell in love with DC, particularly the arts through attending performances at Arena Stage, Shakespeare Theater, and Kennedy Center. This has led in retirement to more active involvement with the arts in DC and the fledging Performing Arts Center in her hometown, South Boston, Virginia. The latter is particularly close to her heart as professional plays were not available to her growing up and were limited even in college. She has worked to help ensure that is not true for the young people in South Boston and surrounding area where many have now grown up performing in the local theater and are now pursuing careers in the arts. For audiences there, it is a chance to see another world as it was and is for Barbara in DC.

Retirement has also allowed her more time with family, particularly her three great nephews Greyson, Sawyer and Asher and great niece Molly. They have already seen their first plays and sat transfixed. Barbara was always interested in politics and volunteered in limited ways for over 20 years before retirement. She has now had the time to be involved in several recent political campaigns. She also enjoys long lunches and dinners with friends without glancing at her cell phone, reading books for pleasure, and finally, being able to sleep a full night without waking up to worry about what has to be done in the morning.

Given her strong commitment to the mission of USAID, Barbara actively volunteers with the UAA in support of its goals and enjoys maintaining friendships with Agency alumni. She is in charge of soliciting, developing and editing the Profiles for the UAA monthly newsletter which is one of the most popular features. Although she was hesitant, her UAA colleagues finally convinced her to write her own profile. Barbara would welcome hearing from friends or those with suggestions for candidates for Alumni Profiles, at: babennett3@gmail.com.

Newsletter schedule

The next UAA newsletter will be sent on May 4. Newsletters will be provided approximately monthly on the first Monday throughout the year. We would like to hear from you about stories or events that can be shared 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 2020 UAA Membership contribution here](#)

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