

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# STATE

MAGAZINE



Brazil's Northeast Star

# RECIFE

FEBRUARY 2008 >>>



08

Commitment and  
Sacrifice

Department leaders praise  
2007 award winners.

14

FSNs of the Year

'Unsung hero of Iraq' is  
Worldwide FSN of the Year.

# Department Awards

## FEATURES

- 20** Standing Up  
Consulate General Juba helps southern Sudan rebuild.
- 22** Post of the Month: Recife  
Small consulate covers Brazil's booming northeast.
- 28** Home Work  
Department employees increasingly telecommute.
- 31** Discovering America  
Interactive technology promotes public diplomacy.
- 34** Civil Service Rotations  
Job rotation expands professional horizons.
- 38** Growing Awareness  
First Lady spotlights Department programs with Middle East visit.
- 40** Arts and Minds  
Cultural programs power Transformational Diplomacy.
- 42** Office of the Month: BEX  
Board of Examiners builds Foreign Service's next generation.



### ON THE COVER

In Olinda and Recife, sister cities since the 17th century, old and new architecture blend by the sea.

*Photograph by Corbis*

## COLUMNS

- 2** From the DG
- 3** In the News
- 46** Medical Report
- 48** Education & Training
- 49** Appointments
- 50** Retirements
- 51** Obituaries
- 52** The Last Word

# 20



## My Recent Visit to Pakistan and Afghanistan

In December, I visited Islamabad, Peshawar, Karachi, Kabul and the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Ghazni Province along with Ben Embury, a Presidential Management Fellow in our Office of Policy Coordination. This was my second overseas trip as Director General. My objective was to survey the work of each post, meet with American and Locally Employed Staff and determine how the Bureau of Human Resources can best serve the needs of our employees. Having served extensively in SCA, it was good to get back to the region and learn of the changes first hand. It was a fascinating trip.

I left Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, with a renewed understanding of the critical importance that our Embassy employees, under the able leadership of Ambassador Anne Patterson, play in combating the spread of global terrorism and promoting the spread of democracy throughout Pakistan. The challenges are abundant—particularly in light of the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto—but the stakes for both Pakistan and America are incredibly high.

We also visited two consulates in-country. The men and women at our consulate in Karachi under Kay Anske's able and inspired leadership, who operate in the face of an extremely difficult physical and security environment, are eagerly waiting the completion of a new compound. The suicide bombing in

March of 2006, which killed Foreign Service specialist David Foy and Iftikhar Ahmed, a local employee of the consulate, serves as a constant reminder of the threats that our colleagues face on a daily basis.



I was deeply impressed with the ongoing work of Lynne Tracy and of our employees in Peshawar, especially considering that the massive growth of personnel at post has stretched their resources to the bone.

I am equally proud and encouraged by the work that our courageous men and women in Afghanistan are doing to help build a country that is stable, democratic

and economically successful. It is clear to me that we are doing good work. In Ghazni, one of our PRTS, I visited FSOs Zach Harkenrider and Rachel Grant, and their counterparts in the military, and learned that, despite the difficult environment, the efforts of this group of talented people have yielded positive, tangible results throughout Ghazni.

Again, in talking with our people in Kabul, Dubai and at an airport meeting in Munich, I got additional insights into what we in HR need to do to support our people and posts overseas. As in all my stops where time permitted, in private meetings I listened to individual concerns and, where possible, have sought to address them.

I came away from my visits with a deep appreciation of the posts' efforts to promote America's foreign policy goals and the challenges they face in fulfilling their mission. Meeting these challenges will not be easy. Many of the problems they face are felt throughout the world: persistent staffing gaps in crucial positions, language deficits and the retention of LES. But we are committed to doing all that is possible.

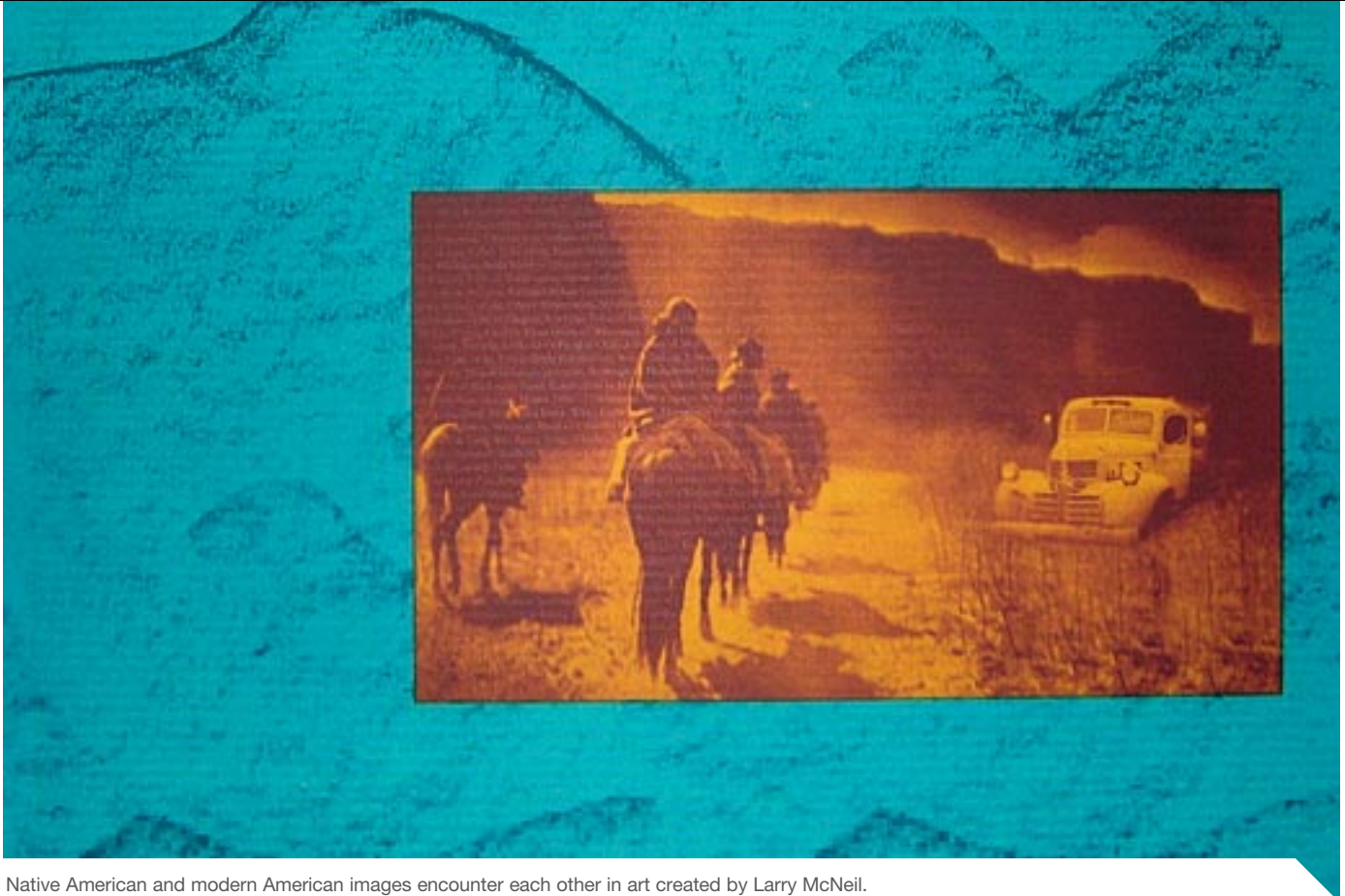
My colleagues and I in the Bureau of Human Resources are actively seeking additional resources for the Department and working to improve customer service.

We welcome your input via unclassified e-mail at "DG Direct." Thank you for your continued service. ■

"I came away from my visits with a deep appreciation of the posts' efforts to promote America's foreign policy goals and the challenges they face in fulfilling their mission."



# NEWS



Native American and modern American images encounter each other in art created by Larry McNeil.

## The Gift of Understanding

### Native American Art Made Available to Embassies

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and the Department's ART in Embassies Program have produced a print portfolio by five influential Native American artists from across the United States, seeking to broaden international understanding and appreciation for contemporary Native American art.

Each of the five artists in the portfolio is donating 20 copies of his or her print—a total of 100 works—to the Department for display in American

embassies throughout the world. Brochures produced by the ART in Embassies staff accompany the print series and include an artist's statement about each work.

The five artists and their tribes are Norman Akers (Osage), Mario Martinez (Yaqui), Larry McNeil (Tlingit), Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (Flathead Salish) and Marie Watt (Seneca).

"The artists in this portfolio inherited the legacy of their ancestors and the 20th century struggle for individual

expression," said Kathleen Ash-Milby, curator at the National Museum of the American Indian. "Their work is an integral component of a larger web connecting the past and present."

The five prints were unveiled in November at a ceremony at Blair House, hosted by Nancy Brinker, chief of protocol. First Lady Laura Bush attended, as did more than 100 guests, including Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy, U.S. and foreign ambassadors and Department personnel.



## Secretary Celebrates Toys for Tots Giving

In mid-December, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice hosted a celebration at which she donated to the Marine Corps, sponsor of the Toys for Tots campaign, the toys collected during the Department's collection drive.

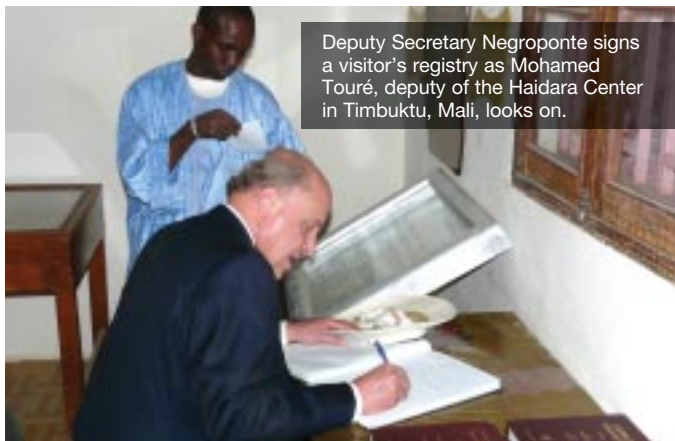
Standing at a podium whose base was heaped with new toys collected during the drive, she thanked donors and then displayed a stuffed animal that sang "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

As the toy sang, the audience of about 100 joined the Secretary in singing along. She then walked the perimeter of the audience, shaking employees' hands.



Bureau of Diplomatic Security Acting Assistant Secretary Greg Starr, left, listens as Secretary of State Rice speaks at the Toys for Tots ceremony.

**Bureau hosts sixth annual Industry Day** In November, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and the American Small Business Coalition hosted the sixth annual Industry Day before an audience of 200 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott, in Rosslyn, Va. OBO's then Director Gen. Charles E. Williams, ret., opened the event by discussing his approach to leadership and his vision and strategy for transforming OBO. He also discussed the obstacles in the transformation, the leadership challenges facing the bureau and the bureau's results, which include completion of 53 new diplomatic facilities during his tenure. Williams then led a roundtable discussion with corporate leaders. OBO's managing directors for the areas of Project Execution, Planning and Development, Operations and Maintenance, and Real Estate chaired similar roundtables on their program areas. There was also a small-business roundtable conducted by staff from the Bureau of Administration's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.



Deputy Secretary Negroponte signs a visitor's registry as Mohamed Touré, deputy of the Haidara Center in Timbuktu, Mali, looks on.

## Deputy Secretary Meets African Leaders

Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer traveled in November to Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali to meet national leaders and representatives of civil society. In Mali, the Deputy Secretary led the presidential delegation to the meeting of the Community of Democracies to highlight the U.S. commitment to promoting democracy, good governance and partnership with nations sharing common values. The delegation discussed democracy, security, rule of law and sustainable development with key partners in West Africa.



# Awards Honor Department's Top Volunteers

Neill G. Krost intended to pay only one visit to the 250 children at the Abomey orphanage, located four hours from his office at the U.S. Embassy in Cotonou, Benin. Once there, however, he said he became overwhelmed.

"My heart was opened up, and I made a commitment" to help the orphanage, he said during a recent ceremony where he was honored as one of five Department employees or family members worldwide who engaged in significant volunteerism.

Krost organized a Christmas charity drive that delivered a large truckload of clothing, books, toys and furniture to the orphanage. He also convinced the mayor of Abomey to supply the orphanage with electricity and water, and provided the orphanage with a new dining room, thanks to the ambassador's Self-Help Program.

For this, Krost was one of those chosen to receive the Secretary of State Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad, sponsored by the American Associates of the Foreign Service Worldwide. He and the four other 2007 SOSA winners each received a certificate and a \$2,500 check from AAFSW at a December ceremony at Main State.

Keynote speaker Deputy Secretary John Negroponte said the honorees answered the President's call for volunteerism and



**Above:** Neill G. Krost, left, receives his award from Deputy Secretary John Negroponte. **Below:** Award winner Alison M. Padget addresses the awards ceremony audience.



"inspired others in their communities."

The honorees included Alison M. Padget, a family member in Beijing who is a volunteer nutrition program coordinator, also for an orphanage. She oversees ordering and transport of infant formula to the orphanage and weighs and measures the babies, trains the staff in sanitation and formula preparation, and alerts doctors to children needing attention. She also helped secure a \$10,000 pharmaceutical company grant for corrective surgeries.

Dennis E. Nice was recognized for his efforts during a three-year assignment in Zagreb, Croatia, where he helped the American International School of Zagreb identify a site for a new facility and formed a multicultural team of architects, engineers, investors and lawyers to plan the location and construction of the school. He also established a financial aid policy for the school and helped it pay off a loan two years in advance, saving thousands of dollars.

Paul A. Sabatine worked to further the education of street children and the employment of destitute women in Dhaka, Bangladesh. As chairman of the board of a school for street children, he had the school building renovated to include a computer lab and made provisions to offer vaccinations and medical care. His management and promotion of the sale of handi-crafts made by a cooperative of marginalized women helped triple the cooperative's income.

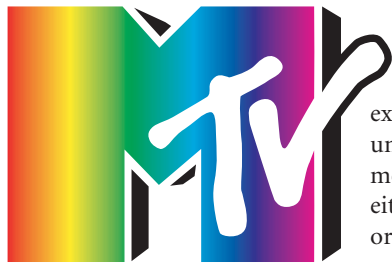
The fifth honoree, Maria Regina Barros Pontes, is a family member who aided rural residents in a poverty-ridden town about 20 miles outside of Managua, Nicaragua. In 2006, she began visiting the town weekly to teach women to make baskets from newspaper. She also asked galleries and craft fairs in Managua to serve as sales outlets, and persuaded the town's mayor to give the cooperative space in the public market and restore an old building as its headquarters.

# ECA-MTV Fellowships Promote Music Research

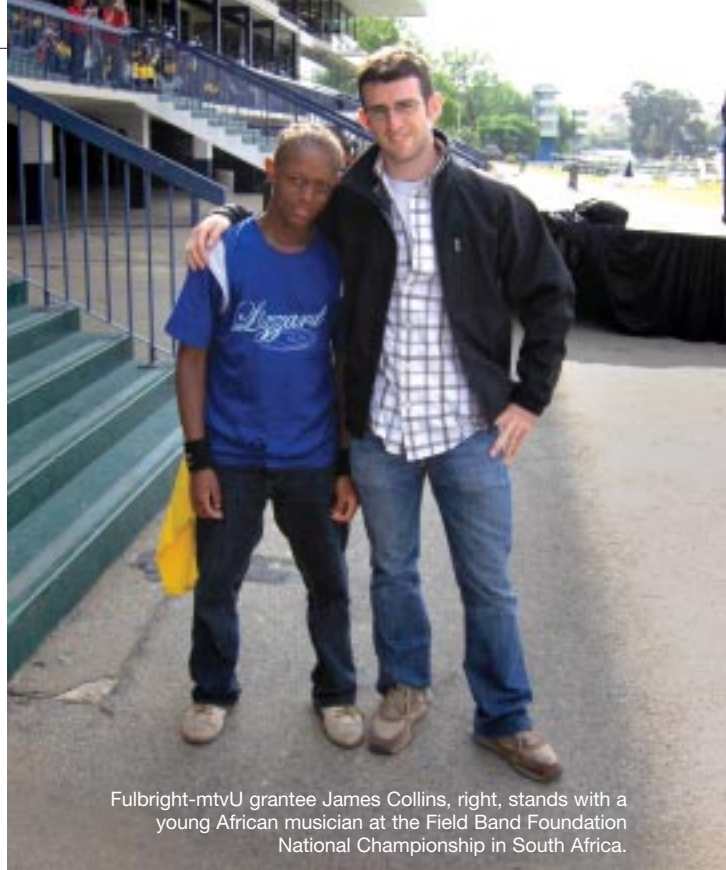
To promote music as a global force for understanding, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and mtvU, Music Television's 24-hour college network, recently unveiled the first Fulbright-mtvU Fellowships. The fellowships allow U.S. students to research an aspect of international musical culture for one academic year in projects they design.

"Music brings people together and bridges communication gaps," said Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs Tom Farrell.

"Through our partnership with mtvU—and capitalizing on their extensive network on U.S. colleges and universities—we look to encourage more college students to study abroad, either through the Fulbright Program or another opportunity."



Four students were awarded the first fellowships and have been sharing their respective experiences from Panama, Cambodia, Israel and South Africa via videos, blogs and podcasts on mtvU and mtvU.com. More information and these reports are at [www.mtvfulbright.com](http://www.mtvfulbright.com).



Fulbright-mtvU grantee James Collins, right, stands with a young African musician at the Field Band Foundation National Championship in South Africa.

## George C. Marshall Conference Center Dedicated

The George C. Marshall Conference Center in the renovated Marshall Wing of the Harry S Truman building was officially dedicated in October. Members of the Marshall family, the Marshall Foundation, officials involved in the Marshall Plan and senior Department of State officials attended. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Henrietta Fore, Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, among others, spoke.

Secretary Rice and Administrator Fore also were among those unveiling a dedication plaque in the center's reception area. The plaque contains a bas-relief image of Secretary Marshall and a quote from a 1947 speech.

The conference center has a 250-seat auditorium, registration and coat check area, business center, two holding areas and five conference rooms, and is managed by the Office of General Services Management. Inquiries and reservation requests may be directed to the conference room coordinator at [gcmconfctr@state.gov](mailto:gcmconfctr@state.gov).



From left, John B. Adams, from the Marshall Foundation; James Winn Jr., grandson of George C. Marshall; Secretary Rice and Administrator Fore stand before the plaque at the dedication of the George C. Marshall Conference Center.

## Brick by Brick

A Habitat for Humanity construction project covers more than straight plumb lines and properly joined construction materials. The project done by volunteers from the U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou, China, centered solely on moving bricks.

On two separate weekends in October and November, the volunteers, in partnership with the J. Kirby Simon Foreign Service Trust, helped build a new six-family home in flood-ravaged Wenwu Village in northern Guangdong Province. Torrential rains in early 2007 had destroyed much of the village, and its inhabitants, mostly rice and bamboo farmers, lacked the resources to rebuild.

At the site, the 39 volunteers from the consulate hand-carried bricks up two floors in assembly-line fashion to supply the bricklayers as they constructed the interior walls of the new home. Each volunteer carried an estimated 7.5 tons of bricks per day, for a group total of almost 300 tons, or 10,000 bricks.

There were hardships: The volunteers' minibus broke down, and diesel oil shortages in China left them without gas for the four-hour (soon to be six-plus-hour) drive back to Guangzhou. Fortunately, a little name-dropping (the consul general was on board and needed to get to Guangzhou for a "high-level" meeting) convinced gas station attendants to fill the tank.

This exercise brought the volunteers together as a community, challenging them to raise the money to complete the project since, even with the Kirby Simon Trust's support, they were still \$1,500 short. They also got a view of conditions in the rural areas of the consular district and a better understanding of how villagers cope with natural disasters.





From left, Selma Deljkovic, of the immigrant visa unit, Elmar Kiselica, Ambassador Charles English, Consular Chief Paul Boyd, Stipica and Irena Bakovic, and immigrant visa unit Chief Cynthia Plath.

## Sarajevo Issues First Visas

In December, the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo issued its first immigrant visa and its first Diversity Visas since the embassy opened in 1995. Ambassador Charles English presented the first immigrant visa to Elmar Kiselica, who will immigrate to the United States to join his Bosnian-American father. Ambassador English also presented Diversity Visas to Stipica and Irena Bakovic from Sarajevo.

Prior to the opening of the immigrant visa unit in Sarajevo on Oct. 1, Bosnians immigrating to the United States had to travel to Zagreb, Croatia, for medical appointments and immigrant visa interviews.

## DG Officially Opens Diplotots' Playground

As they prepared to cut the ribbon reopening the Diplotots child care center's playground for older children, Director General Harry K. Thomas and William "Bart" Bush, an assistant regional administrator in the General Services Administration, both spoke. GSA funded the playground's new equipment and directed the renovation to ensure that safety standards were met. For instance, all of the playground's "ground," the flat surface onto which a child could fall, is made of a spongy synthetic material. There are roughly 200,000 playground injuries annually, mostly falls, Bush said.



With the improvements, "There're going to be a lot of smiling faces on this playground," Bush observed.

The event began with a tour of the child care center ended with a reception for guests and parents.

Cutting the ribbon to open the playground are, from left, GSA's Bart Bush, Aiyimjan Stoddard, DG Harry K. Thomas, Ryan Peterson and his mother, Cathy Peterson.

# STATE

MAGAZINE

## MAGAZINE STAFF

Rob Wiley  
*Editor-in-Chief*

Ed Warner  
*Deputy Editor*

Bill Palmer  
*Writer/Editor*

David L. Johnston  
*Art Director*

## ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

James A. Forbes  
*Executive Secretary*

Kelly Clements

Annette R. Cocchiaro

*State Magazine* (ISSN 1099-4165) is published monthly, except bimonthly in July and August, by the U.S. Department of State, 2201 C St., N.W., Washington, DC. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing locations.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Send changes of address to *State Magazine*, 2401 E Street, N.W., SA-1, Room H-236, Washington, DC 20522-0108. You may also e-mail address changes to [statemagazine@state.gov](mailto:statemagazine@state.gov).

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

*State Magazine* is available by paid subscription through the U.S. Government Printing Office by telephone at (202) 512-1800 or on the web at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>.

## SUBMISSIONS

For details on submitting articles to *State Magazine*, request our guidelines, "Getting Your Story Told," by e-mail at [statemagazine@state.gov](mailto:statemagazine@state.gov); download them from our Web site at [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov); or send your request in writing to *State Magazine*, 2401 E Street, N.W., HR/ER/SMG, SA-1, Room H-236, Washington, DC 20522-0108.

The submission deadline for the April issue is February 15. The deadline for the May issue is March 15.





2007  
DEPARTMENT  
AWARDS

# Commitment





# and Sacrifice



## DEPARTMENT LEADERS PRAISE 2007 AWARD WINNERS

**BY BILL PALMER**

Leadership, creativity, effectiveness, efficiency and a sense of mission.

These are the values former Under Secretary for Management Henrietta Fore said are embodied by the State Department employees honored at the 2007 Departmental Awards Ceremony in November.

Under Secretary Fore, now U.S. Agency for International Development administrator, presented the awards in the Benjamin Franklin Room. She noted that employees are increasingly in the front lines of war zones.

"They have demonstrated their commitment to public service," she said.

After the presentation of the colors by the Armed Forces Color Guard and the playing of the national anthem by the U.S. Air Force Brass Quintet, Director General Harry K. Thomas opened the ceremony and thanked the families and foundations that make possible many of the awards.

Despite having been called to the White House that morning, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made it to the ceremony in time to congratulate the winners and pose for a group photo.

She praised the honorees for "making heroic sacrifices, often shoulder to shoulder with our men and women in uniform."

---

*The author is a writer/editor at State Magazine.*





2007  
DEPARTMENT  
AWARDS



*Award for Excellence in Labor Diplomacy*  
**ZACHARY V. HARKENRIDER**

In recognition of his outstanding performance in combating slavery, trafficking in persons and child labor in Niger by consistently providing first-rate reporting and analysis of these issues, recommending innovative diplomatic approaches to confront them and effectively implementing those strategies.



*James A. Baker III–C. Howard Wilkins Jr. Award for Outstanding Deputy Chief of Mission*  
**ANNA ANDERSON LEHEL BORG**

For exceptionally superior service guiding the U.S. Embassy in Rome toward becoming a “best-practices post” and with appreciation for her outstanding management efforts to boost morale and mentor colleagues.



*Warren Christopher Award for Outstanding Achievement in Global Affairs*  
**LAWRENCE E. BARTLETT**

For his outstanding efforts in guiding the U.S. humanitarian response to crises in Iraq, Lebanon, Bhutan and Nepal, and with appreciation for his lifesaving assistance and protection of refugees and conflict victims.



*Sue M. Cobb Award for Exemplary Diplomatic Service*  
**DAVID C. MULFORD**

In recognition of his extraordinary efforts to foster commercial ties with India and with appreciation for his outstanding management of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi.



*Diplomatic Security Employee of the Year Award*  
**STEVEN J. BERNSTEIN**

For his exemplary leadership and innovative approaches to resolving Transformational Diplomacy security issues and outstanding efforts to empower the embassy and the USAID mission in their endeavors in the dangerous, harsh and difficult environments of Sudan.





*Director General's Award for Impact and Originality in Reporting*  
**MICHAEL GFOELLER**

For outstanding reporting and analysis on regional security issues impacting U.S. interests in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf.



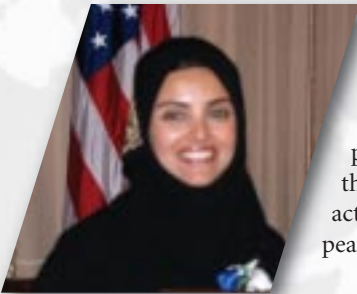
*Equal Employment Opportunity Award*  
**LAUREEN J. STEPHENS-RICE**

For her outstanding support of women and minorities at the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, and with appreciation for her many efforts to address discrimination against local female guards and recognize female law enforcement colleagues.



*Swanee Hunt Award for Advancing Women's Role in Policy Formulation*  
**JANAE E. COOLEY**

In recognition of her outstanding efforts to encourage and support Afghan women to become leaders in the policy process and role models for those young Afghan women who follow them.



*Swanee Hunt Award for Advancing Women's Role in Policy Formulation*  
**SALWA MOHAMMED AL-SARHI**

In recognition of her outstanding efforts to expand women's political participation, advance women's leadership in the public arena, strengthen the advocacy power of women at the grassroots level, mobilize peace activists around policy initiatives of concern to women, promote women as peace builders and increase economic opportunities of women in Yemen.



*Innovation in the Use of Technology Award*  
**JEFFREY A. MOON**

For his creative use of wiki technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's crisis-management business practices and procedures.



*Leamon R. Hunt Award for Management Excellence*  
**CHRISTOPHER D. DYE**

For his outstanding efforts to improve the operational efficiency of the U.S. Embassy in Conakry and with appreciation for his many contributions to ensuring the safety and security of the mission and its staff.



2007  
DEPARTMENT  
AWARDS



*Linguist of the Year Award*  
**THOMAS S. MILLER**

In recognition of his creative and persuasive use of his fluent Greek and Turkish to advance the goals of Transformational Diplomacy, reach out to the Muslim community and foster better understanding between the politically divided Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities.



*Frank E. Loy Award for Environmental Diplomacy*  
**ROBERT JOSEPH TANSEY**

For his outstanding efforts to encourage cooperation on water and the environment amid tensions in the Middle East and with appreciation for his many contributions to improving Israel's environment through the expert advice of U.S. technical agencies.



*Thomas Morrison Information Management Award*  
**WALTER CLARK CUNNINGHAM**

In recognition of his outstanding efforts to advance mission communication improvements in Sudan.



*Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Public Diplomacy*  
**JULIET WURR**

For helping to promote President Bush's Freedom Agenda during a transitional period in Lebanon's history and fostering common interests between the Lebanese and American peoples.



*Office Management Specialist of the Year Award*  
**KATHRYN M. COSTER**

In recognition of her exceptional performance and many contributions to advancing mission objectives and assisting her colleagues at the U.S. Consulate General in São Paulo.





*Arnold L. Raphael Memorial Award*

**DANIEL J. HALL**

For mentoring, advising and counseling Foreign Service officers throughout his career with the Department of State.



*Luther I. Repogle Award for Management Improvement*

**KAREN CLARK STANTON**

In recognition of her outstanding efforts to develop exceptional service improvements at the U.S. embassies in Singapore and Bandar Seri Begawan.



*Mary A. Ryan Award for Outstanding Public Service*

**BARBARA CECELIA CUMMINGS**

In recognition of her outstanding public service, strategic planning, human resource development and leadership at the U.S. Embassy in Rome.



*Rockwell Anthony Schnabel Award for Advancing U.S.-EU Relations*

**JOHN R. BYERLY**

In recognition of his steadfast leadership and adroit diplomacy in concluding the historic Air Transport Agreement between the United States and the European Union from 2003 to 2007. His efforts significantly advanced U.S. aviation interests in Europe and broke new ground for U.S. international aviation policy.



*Barbara M. Watson Award for Consular Excellence*

**SANTIAGO M. BURCIAGA**

In recognition of his innovative leadership of the U.S. Consulate General in Ciudad Juarez's immigrant visa unit and outstanding contributions toward the Secure Borders and Open Doors programs.



*Herbert Salzman Award for Excellence in International Economic Performance*

**ALYCE N. ABDALLA**

In recognition of her outstanding contributions to advancing the U.S.-Iraq Joint Economic Transition Plan, a vital element in the President's New Way Forward in Iraq.



2007  
DEPARTMENT  
AWARDS

# F S N S O F





# THE YEAR



## 'UNsung HERO OF IRAQ' IS FSN OF THE YEAR BY BILL PALMER

Among the honorees at the 2007 Departmental Awards ceremony were six accomplished Foreign Service National employees who were selected from an already elite pool of 81 nominees worldwide. This marked a substantial increase from last year's 55 nominees.

One of the six—Sawsan Al-Bassam of Iraq—was named worldwide FSN of the Year for her outstanding work in representing the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad in the face of personal hardship and danger. All of the winning FSNs come from countries that experienced dramatic events or key bilateral negotiations.

In her remarks at the awards ceremony, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called FSNs the crown jewels of America's diplomatic presence around the world. "They are our very best ambassadors," she said, "with due respect to those who carry the title."

All of the FSNs of the Year received certificates, cash awards and trips to Washington, D.C. Highlights of the trip included a photo with Secretary Rice, a reception given by the Office of Overseas Employment, Voice of America interviews and a Pentagon tour. Regional bureau activities included other tours, as well as meetings with the assistant secretaries and representatives of nongovernmental organizations.

---

*The author is a writer/editor at State Magazine.*





## 2007 DEPARTMENT AWARDS

### *NEA and Worldwide FSN of the Year*

Sawsan Al-Bassam, until recently a political specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, is the 2007 FSN of the Year. Nominated by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, she was cited for “her genuineness, diplomatic skill and perseverance in the face of great personal hardship to masterfully represent Embassy Baghdad and work in the best interests of Iraq.”

Described by the embassy as “one of the unsung heroes of Iraq,” Al-Bassam worked for the United States as a military translator before moving to the embassy in 2004. As the first FSN in the embassy’s political section, she developed a vast network of Sunni and Shia contacts who were unable to discern her religious background due to her strict neutrality—a rare feat in Iraq’s intensely sectarian environment. She tried to empathize with all her contacts.

“If they feel you are ignoring their issues, they’ll stop talking to you,” she said.

While in charge of human rights issues, she tracked down reports of abuses and persuaded hesitant victims to talk to U.S. officials, despite great risks to them and her. Even high-level officials trusted her enough to talk about abuses by security forces.

She was also a valued resource on other issues, such as legislation, elections and religious freedom.

She gained access to critical information on attacks and political developments before it became generally known, and her information was always correct—a great achievement in a country rife with rumor. She helped officers—who turn over yearly and sometimes don’t have an Iraq background—comprehend the depth and complexity of Iraqi politics and society.

“It’s important for the FSNs to show officers how people think,” she said. “I’m proud of everything I have done.”

### *EUR*

Andreas Andreou, a consular assistant at the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia, is the FSN of the Year for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. He was cited for his leadership during the departure of American noncombatants from Lebanon during the



AL-BASSAM



ANDREOU



2006 conflict there and his initiative in revising fraudulent-document training for Cypriot airline and immigration personnel.

During the departure of 14,000 Americans from Lebanon via Cyprus to the United States, Andreou met helicopters ferrying Americans from the embassy in Beirut to Larnaca airport and had to tackle such difficult problems as helping the sick and elderly, finding a home for an unaccompanied teenager and assisting two one-month-old infants until the embassy could locate their adoptive parents. When they were finally reunited with their mothers, "it was an amazing feeling," he said. Another woman wanted to kiss him after he helped her change her plane ticket and save \$2,000.

While he was trying to help and calm sometimes agitated citizens, he was working behind the scenes with Cypriot immigration and intelligence authorities to get citizens who lacked proper documentation admitted into the country. It wouldn't have been possible without trust, which he had established through years of

treating these officials with respect, listening to them and sharing information, he said.

Andreou also took it upon himself to revise the training for detecting fraudulent documents, which the embassy gives to Cypriot officials. "I saw the need to do the training in Greek, because immigration officials feel more comfortable in their own language," he said. He taught the course to more than 200 airline, immigration and police officials and received plaudits for his hands-on approach, which stressed working with real documents.

He has worked for the embassy for 18 years. He and his wife Maria, who also works for the embassy, have two children.

### SCA

Abdul Qayyum Raja, the motor pool supervisor at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, is the FSN of the Year for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs. He was cited for "his creativity and leadership in improving motor pool operations, thereby securing





# 2007 DEPARTMENT AWARDS

the public mobility and safety of Embassy Islamabad personnel and VIPs traveling within a critical-threat environment.”

Recognizing the need to give all the drivers at the embassy and consulates anti-terrorism training, Qayyum suggested bringing in Bureau of Diplomatic Security trainers and arranged for all of the 120 drivers to take the two-day course. He also relentlessly lobbied post management to increase the number of armored vehicles, which are mandatory for transporting Americans.

“The old Chevys were targets,” he said, “because only the U.S. Embassy has them.”

Despite chronic short staffing, Qayyum in 2006 dealt with visits from the President, Vice President (twice), Secretary of State (twice), Secretary of Defense (twice), 30 congressional delegations and 89 other official delegations. He did so with very little interrup-

He keeps passengers safe by changing routes and schedules, and motivates his drivers, who average 80 hours of overtime monthly, through his empathetic leadership and fair duty assignments.

“I always recommend people for awards,” he said. “It keeps morale high.”

### AF

Aminata Ouattara Coulibaly, a political specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Abidjan, is the FSN of the Year for the Bureau of African Affairs. She was cited for “her breadth of historical and social knowledge, personal and professional connections and abiding interest in improving governance and society on behalf of the United States and Côte d’Ivoire.

In this danger-pay post, Coulibaly has fostered embassy contacts with the country’s major political actors, both in the rebel-held areas and government-controlled zones.

“I know most of the important people in the country,” she said.

She used her contacts to help the ambassador become the first foreign ambassador to travel through rebel territory in February 2006.

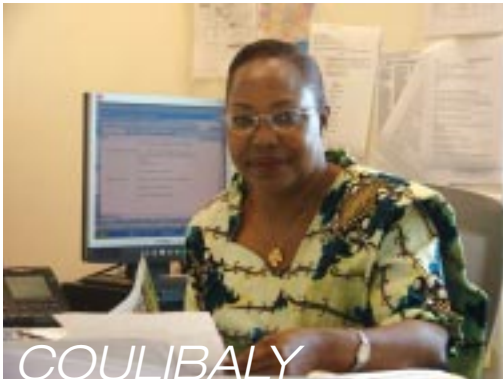
“I had to make sure the government people knew that I made contact with the rebels to help secure meetings for the ambassador,” she said. Being from the northern region of the country helped her establish trust with the rebels, as did knowing some of the leaders from their student days.

In a country where suspicion is widespread, she said, she makes it a point to be fair, impartial and professional.

She also substantially contributed to the fight against trafficking in persons and female genital mutilation. Her tenacious data collection and interviewing pushed law enforcement authorities and the Family and Social Welfare Ministry to improve their data collection and reporting of child trafficking. She identified a nongovernmental organization in the rebel-held North that energized Islamic leaders and the general population to begin an effective campaign against genital mutilation.

She also helped the embassy connect with people who were reintroducing educational opportunities for children in rebel-held areas, resulting in much goodwill for the United States.

Coulibaly is married and has one daughter.



tion in normal motor pool operations, often by working around the clock and sleeping in his office. But he is quick to credit his drivers, his mechanics and his wife, who takes care of their four children when he is too busy to get home.

A devastating earthquake in northern Pakistan in October 2005 stretched the overtaxed motor pool even further.

“It was very hard for me,” Qayyum said. “Lots of people came to help out.”

### WHA

Carolina Dominguez, an information assistant at the U.S. Embassy in Caracas, is the FSN of the year for the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. She was cited for “her extraordinary courage, judgment, fortitude and professionalism as a ‘one-person public diplomacy strategy’ in Venezuela, ensuring the U.S. message is correctly and coherently transmitted.”

A reporter and producer for radio and television stations before





Secretary Rice, fourth from left, gathers with the winners of the FSN awards at the Department's ceremony.

she joined the embassy, she knows every important member of the Venezuelan media and travels throughout the country with senior embassy officers to work with regional media.

The premier example of her professionalism and courage occurred in April 2006, when Ambassador William Brownfield was assailed by Venezuelan officials at a donation event and later assaulted by a gang of armed pro-government motorcycle thugs during a harrowing trip through downtown Caracas. The bikers were throwing eggs, tomatoes and potatoes, she said, and showing guns. She calmly videotaped the violent attacks, even when the thugs were eyeball to eyeball with her.

"I was very scared," she said, "but my first thought was that I had to have their faces."

Back at the embassy, she disseminated the footage to the media, which broadcast it around the world within minutes. The images embarrassed the Chavez regime and have discouraged more such attempts against embassy officers.

She has the trust of even members of the official press.

"I'm very polite, try to respect everybody and don't try to change their minds," she said. "A journalist is a witness; we report, not judge."

Given the hostile climate, she doesn't tell anyone outside her family that she works for the U.S. embassy.

"I say I'm a 'desperate housewife,'" she smiled.

Dominguez is married and has a daughter.

## EAP

Ayako Kimura, a political specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, is the FSN of the Year for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. She was cited for "her extraordinary initiative and tireless commitment in securing an agreement enhancing the interoperability of U.S. and Japanese forces, thereby transforming the U.S. presence in Japan."

She joined the embassy four years ago, after studying security policy at Columbia University, and immediately began working on

what proved to be multiyear negotiations leading to a historic bilateral agreement that will reshape the presence of U.S. forces in Japan.

Known and trusted by every major player in Japan's security sector, she used her vast network of contacts to provide the U.S. negotiating team with critical advice and inside information that were essential to the successful outcome of the negotiations.

Capitalizing on the military base realignment agreement, Kimura helped reshape the relationship between base-hosting communities and the U.S. military. She convinced cities and prefectures to expand their dialogue with the United States beyond protests to include cultural exchanges and disaster relief cooperation. By regularly engaging skeptics, "we were able to show we cared," she said.

She also facilitated the quick and effective U.S. military response to the devastating Niigata earthquake. Working 20-hour days, she served as the central coordinator between U.S. and Japanese forces and local governments to ensure that U.S. relief teams could install air conditioning units at sweltering evacuation centers. After the earthquake, she organized a seminar on civilian-military disaster relief cooperation at the embassy.

Kimura also identified a strategy to secure legislative approval for the \$6 billion Japan had pledged to relocate 8,000 U.S. Marines and their dependents from Okinawa to Guam. To secure passage of the law, she organized a series of visits by key Japanese legislative leaders to Guam. The visits were cited by Japanese Defense Ministry officials as playing a decisive role in the Diet's 2007 vote on the funding.

She also initiated a study group to bring together top U.S. and Japanese defense thinkers in the government, military and academia. This group has become the embassy's primary channel to convey U.S. security policies to Japanese opinion leaders and expose Washington policymakers to Japan's leading defense experts.

Kimura is married. ■

*The author is a writer/editor at State Magazine.*





Children in Juba playing at a water source.

CONSULATE GENERAL JUBA  
HELPS SUDAN REBUILD  
**BY MAKILA JAMES**

# STANDING UP

The U.S. Consulate General in Juba, the capital of Southern Sudan, epitomizes Transformational Diplomacy. An unaccompanied post in one of the most challenging environments, Juba reflects Secretary Rice's Transformational Diplomacy goals of laying "new diplomatic foundations" and working in "partnership, not paternalism"; that is, working with other people, not for them.

One of Juba's primary objectives for Southern Sudan is to help ensure the success of the historic 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which the United States played a major role in facilitating. The CPA helped transform the region from a war-torn area to one of peace and enormous economic potential. The post's challenge is to build on that accord and promote rapid development.

The Consulate General in Juba was opened in November 2005 by then-Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, after the formation of the regional Government of Southern Sudan. The post demonstrates U.S. commitment to the CPA, which ended more than 20 years of civil war between the Islamic-dominated government in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Army and its political wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in the South.

## **Two Systems**

The CPA created a federal government system in Sudan based on the Government of National Unity in Khartoum and the SPLM-dominated semiautonomous GOSS in Juba. The U.S. Consulate General in Juba focuses on U.S. engagement with the people and government of the South.

The peace agreement opened the door for the GOSS to start developing and modernizing Southern Sudan. After signing the CPA, the GOSS and its donor partners began delivering potable water, establishing rural health clinics, schools and independent local government and seeking how to best exploit the South's abundant natural resources. Although the oil there is managed by Khartoum, there is also vast agricultural and mining potential.

Southern Sudan also has a rich ecosystem and the largest freshwater wetland in Africa, the Sudd. Despite decades of war, the region still has concentrations of animals that were thought to be extinct in this area. In 2006, the Wildlife Conservation Society documented the migration of 1.2 million white-eared kob, tiang antelope and Mongalla gazelle, as well as smaller herds of elephants, giraffe





**Clockwise, from left:** The author and a construction worker adjust bricks for the consulate general's walkway. Traditional dancer in Juba. Performers play "tackle malaria" with bed nets for Beat Malaria Day. A basketball team plays in the Sports for Peace Tournament.

and other animals in Southern Sudan. This discovery increased Southern Sudan's potential for ecotourism.

In recognizing the "one country, two systems" approach for Sudan, the CPA established a complex governing structure. During the six-year interim period, national elections and a final referendum on Southern self-determination are to be held. There are also plans to conduct Sudan's first census in almost two decades.

Against this backdrop, the Consulate General in Juba's staff of 12 U.S. direct hires and its roughly 24 Locally Employed staff have worked since September 2006, when the first full-time consul general was assigned. Now there are a consul general, a political officer, seven officers from the U.S. Agency for International Development under the direction of the USAID Director for Southern Sudan, plus an HIV/AIDS specialist from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a Department of Defense liaison officer.

### **Infrastructure Needed**

Southern Sudan needs roads and bridges to facilitate resettlement of returnees, transport food and enhance regional trade. The U.S. government's contribution in this area, through USAID projects, was enormously important.

The consulate general has also helped facilitate many people-to-

people activities. USAID's partnership with Mercy Corps led Nike Corporation to provide sports equipment for a "Sports for Peace" program that funded youth basketball and soccer tournaments. The consulate general and the embassy's public affairs section also helped obtain an Ambassador's Cultural Preservation Grant that will help preserve the Southern Sudan Archives, which contain the region's historical records.

The Consulate General in Juba has received a lot of drop-in visits from government contacts, diplomatic colleagues, Juba residents and visiting Americans. Its most popular events have been goat roastings, the International HIV/AIDS Day Commemoration and the Black History Month film and discussion.

Difficulties do occur. The Internet—the post's lifeline—occasionally goes out for days, and there have been small electrical fires on the compound caused by old wiring and power outages. However, these early problems have been fixed.

On the other hand, employees still have to take weekly malaria medication, and it is really hot almost half of the year.

But for most who served in the first year of the U.S. Consulate General in Juba's existence, it was a privilege to have helped establish a strong U.S. presence in this vital part of Africa. The staff will always remember helping rebuild a devastated society where the structures may be falling down, but the people are standing up. ■

*The author was the first full-time consul general in Southern Sudan.*



Boa Viagem beach, where consulate housing is located, is beautiful, but swimmers must watch out for sharks. *Photograph courtesy of Secretary of Tourism of Pernambuco*



# RECIFE

**SMALL CONSULATE COVERS BRAZIL'S  
BOOMING NORTHEAST**

**BY DIANA PAGE**





## POST OF THE MONTH>>>

# Recife



**COUNTRY>>>** Brazil

**CAPITAL>>>** Brasilia

**TOTAL AREA>>>** 8,511,965 square kilometers

**APPROXIMATE SIZE>>>** Slightly smaller than the United States

**GOVERNMENT>>>** Federal republic

**INDEPENDENCE>>>** September 7, 1822  
(from Portugal)

**POPULATION>>>** 190 million

**LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH>>>** 72 years

**LANGUAGES>>>** Portuguese (official), English, Spanish and French

**CURRENCY>>>** Real (BRL)

**PER CAPITA INCOME>>>** \$8,800

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE>>>** 9.6 percent

**IMPORT PARTNERS>>>** United States (16.2 percent), Argentina (8.8 percent) and China (8.7 percent)

**EXPORT PARTNERS>>>** United States (17.8 percent), Argentina (8.5 percent) and China (6.1 percent)

**INTERNET COUNTRY CODE>>>** .br



# When was

the 193-year-old U.S. Consulate in Recife most important to American interests in Brazil?

Though a case could be made for World War II, when U.S. naval and air bases in the region provided strategic support, many Brazilians would cite the 1960s. Then, hundreds of American aid experts and Peace Corps volunteers provided development assistance focused on Brazil's poorest region, the impoverished northeastern *Sertão* (dry lands). In fact, Brazil's contrasts—verdant forest and bone-scattered desert, wealth and poverty, reactionary and revolutionary politics—have always been most evident in the Northeast.

But the farsighted would argue that the early 21st century is the most important time, as the region is transformed by economic growth. And the tiny U.S. Consulate, with five Foreign Service officers assisted by an eligible family member and 30 Locally Employed staff, is going to be part of this historic moment.

Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva—called “Lula” by everyone—was born in the backlands of Pernambuco state, about 160 miles from the capital of Recife. He has always been determined to redress the economic inequalities his family suffered. Thus, a sizable proportion of the Brazilian government's Growth Acceleration Program funds

PHOTOGRAPHS: (ABOVE) SECRETARY OF TOURISM OF PERNAMBUCO; (OPPOSITE PAGE) U.S. CONSULATE IN RECIFE





**Opposite page:** Colorful Carnival dancers perform in Marco Zero square by the old port. A monument by artist Francisco Brennand is in the background. **Left:** A statue of Gilberto Freire, father of Brazilian sociology, has a scenic riverside view of Recife. **Above:** Governor Eduardo Campos, center, receives Ambassador Clifford Sobel and Principal Officer Diana Page in the gubernatorial palace in January, shortly after taking office.

are being designated for the Northeast. Approximately \$8 billion will go to the ultramodern port of Suape, 30 miles south of Recife. There, an oil refinery, a shipyard to build oil tankers, a railroad hub, chemical industries, grain silos and ethanol tanks all are being built.

Although São Paulo's dynamic economy and Rio de Janeiro's legendary glamour are better known to the world, Brazil's Northeast is about to emerge from the background. The region's nine states have three cities, each with more than 2 million people, and the states' total population is more than 50 million. If the 1825 revolt in the Northeast had led to secession and independence from the Brazil of

Emperor Dom Pedro I, this region would now be the third largest nation in Latin America—after the rest of Brazil and Mexico. As a setting for slave uprisings, messianic leaders and attempted revolts, the Northeast has a turbulent history interwoven with that of the United States.

When Dutch colonists were expelled from Recife in 1654, the small Jewish community fled the Portuguese Inquisition, finding a safe haven in what was then called New Amsterdam. In 2004, the consulate helped the Kahal Zur Israel Synagogue Museum celebrate the 350th anniversary of the Recife Jews' exodus with an exposition in what is now the city of New York.



The consulate staff poses outside on a warm December day.

In 1817, when a group of Freemasons in Recife tried to establish a republic and overthrow the Portuguese monarchy, they sent an envoy to President James Monroe, seeking support and recognition. Before the United States could respond, the Portuguese army and navy crushed the rebellion, but U.S. Consul Joseph Ray tried to protect foreigners sympathetic to the rebels.

Protecting American citizens and promoting democracy continues to be a primary goal of the consulate. Consular officers stand ready to help the approximately 5,000 American citizens resident in the region and will have processed more than 30,000 applications for nonimmigrant visas in 2007. Many applicants travel 1,000 miles for the interview.

To meet the growing demand, the consulate received a complete Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations makeover in 2007, doubling the area of the old Portuguese villa that was purchased in 1964 and houses consular operations. A new public affairs section was also added, enabling wider outreach.

One public diplomacy innovation in the Northeast is the “USA Fair.” The first such fair took place in Recife in May 2005, when a shopping mall offered its exhibition center for the consulate’s stands. Besides a consular booth to answer visa questions, the fair included U.S. Agency for International Development–sponsored organizations, the Partners of the Americas, the American Chamber of Commerce, the American School and the American Brazilian Association, a binational education center.

The four-day fair spread the word about programs such as the Youth Ambassadors. Through this program, 35 public high school students were selected by the U.S. Mission to spend a week in Washington, D.C., and a week in an American high school. This public diplomacy program has been adopted by other U.S. missions in Latin America. The next USA Fair was to be held in February in the city of Fortaleza, Ceará state.

In October 2007, the consulate formed partnerships with the American School in Recife and with two social projects, a dance

academy helping underprivileged youth and a local school band for children with disabilities. It undertook the partnerships to celebrate Daniel Pearl Music Days, named to honor the American journalist who was murdered by terrorists in Pakistan in 2002. The program’s musical message of tolerance, solidarity and overcoming hatred echoed deeply in this tropical city, which has one of the highest per capita murder rates in the world. Recife is a critical-threat-rated post for crime.

Despite crime-related stress and the challenges of an underdeveloped infrastructure, those who serve in Recife almost always remember it as one of their best Foreign Service experiences. With beachfront apartments overlooking the ocean, everyone can relax by walking along the sand or trying out the seafood cuisine. For families, the American School of Recife, with preschool through high school, offers many special events in a neighborhood near the consulate’s apartments. The elegant Santa Isabel Theater in the city center hosts a symphony orchestra, dance, theater and





A tile mural by Francisco Brennand stands out in a night view of one of Recife's riverfronts. **Right:** Ambassador Clifford Sobel and Barbara Sobel visit the Kahal Zur Israel museum on the site of the first synagogue in the Americas. Beside them are Tania Kaufman, director of the Jewish Historical Archives of Pernambuco, and a museum guide. **Bottom:** USAID project trainees in the culinary arts pose behind their handiwork.

musical events.

Throughout Brazil, Recife is well known for its musicians, artists, poets and scholars, and boasts 24 institutions of higher learning. The city's most famous living artist is Francisco Brennand, a painter, sculptor and ceramist who has left his signature on the city landscape. His sculpture garden in the old port and his studio-factory-exposition hall, set in an Atlantic forest reserve, surprise and intrigue visitors.

A software development center created in refurbished sugar warehouses in old Recife has become Porto Digital—a center for information technology development with involvement from more than 100 companies, including Microsoft and Motorola.

But what draws most tourists to Recife—and its beautiful sister city of Olinda—is Carnival. Unlike the extravagant, choreographed pageants of samba schools in Rio de Janeiro, the street dances and parades in Recife and Olinda are exuberant, improvised and almost spontaneous. The most organized event takes place on the Saturday before Ash Wednesday when a loose collection of colorful bands riding amped-up sound trucks slowly snakes through the city. The parade is misnamed the “Rooster of Dawn”; it doesn't get going much before 10 a.m. and lasts all day.

On the following three days, drummers and dancers can be found at any time in the 18th century cobblestone streets of Olinda, a United Nations–designated heritage site. The frenetic rhythms continue through old Recife, suburban neighborhoods and small towns well into Ash Wednesday, when the waiters from the bars have their own traditional parade.

Luckily for the post's consular duty officer, few Americans have



discovered the Carnival festivities in Pernambuco. But that may change. Luxurious resorts and condominiums are under construction along the 2,000 miles of soft-sand beaches and coral reefs, which experience year-round warm weather and no hurricanes.

The future is almost here and could bring many visitors. ■

## DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES INCREASINGLY TELECOMMUTE BY JUDY IKELS

Telework, the federal government's term for telecommuting, is increasingly becoming part of the Department's way of doing business. A March 2007 survey showed an increase in the number of telework-eligible positions from 2,343 in December 2006 to 2,453 as of the survey. Of these positions, 2,194, or 89 percent, were filled by employees who were willing to telework.

Telework reduces absences, relieves stress on the environment, eases office crowding, increases productivity and accommodates people with disabilities. Employees reduce their travel time and associated costs, gaining more time for their families, and the Department gains, among other things, the ability to prepare for emergencies that might require the long-term absence of many workers.

Telework also helps recruiting, because younger recruits live in a world of e-mail, text messages, iPods and TiVo, using the technologies to enable anytime-anyplace approaches to life and work.

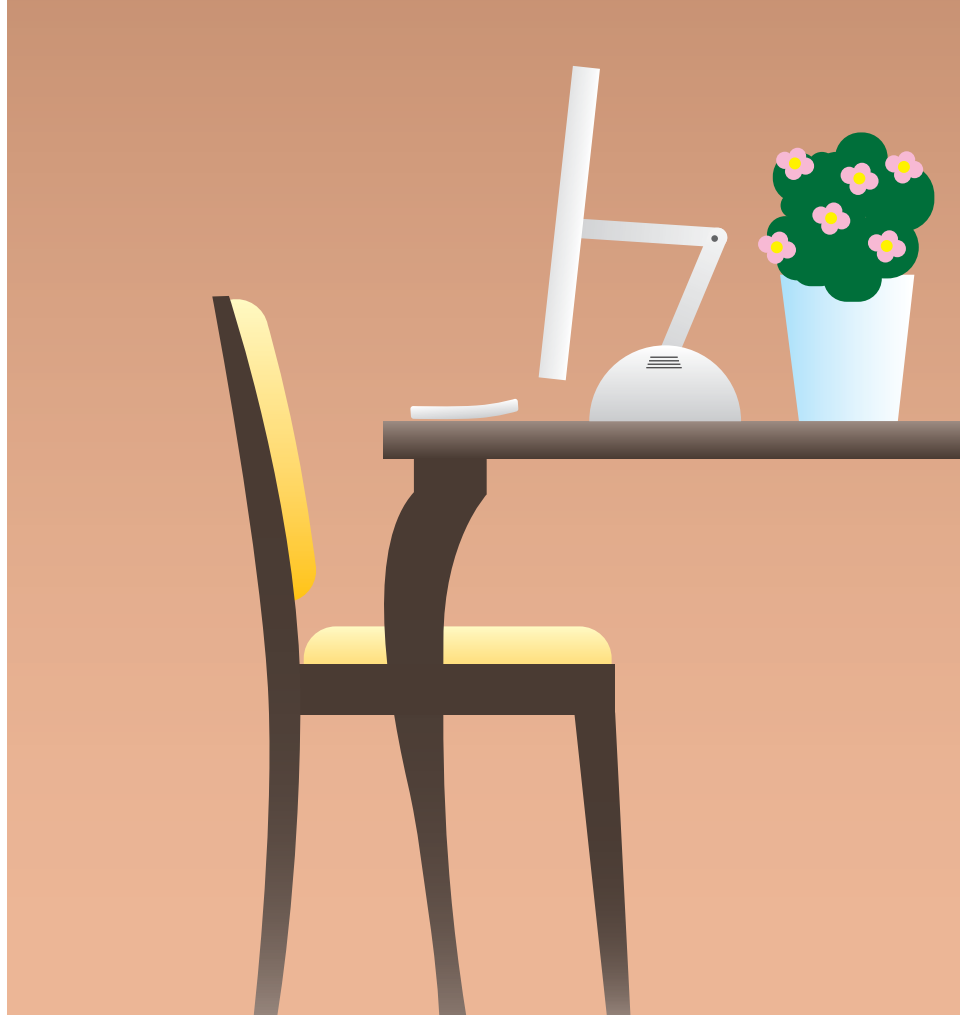
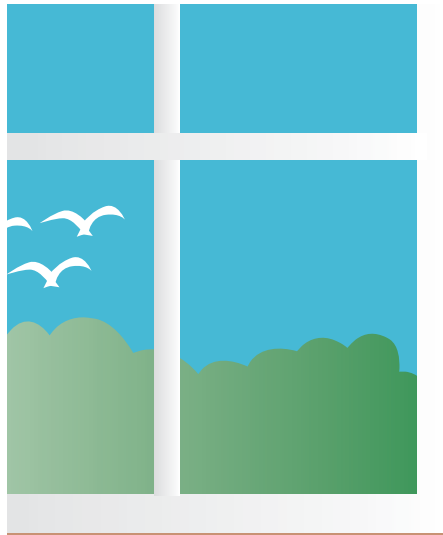
Teleworking employees still must meet face-to-face, but they don't have to come to their cubicles 40 hours a week to get work done. Many teleworkers are more productive, have better attitudes toward their work and feel greater loyalty to their employers when given the flexibility to telework.

### **Surprisingly Secure**

But what about the security of information teleworkers use? The typical teleworker is a model employee in adhering to security guidelines and keeping data safe, because the telework program sets out requirements for computer safety. By contrast, "unofficial teleworkers" who work at home on nights and weekends, often without authorization, are a major security risk, according to a study by the Telework Exchange, a public-private partnership. The study, based on a May 2007 survey of 258 federal teleworkers and non-teleworkers, found that 94 percent of official teleworkers had received data security training, compared with only 87 percent of non-teleworkers.

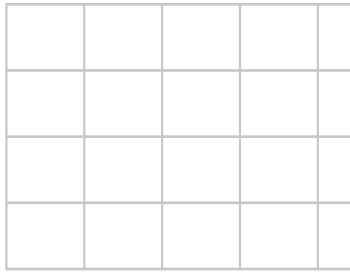
Those who decide on their own to work extra hours from home "are the Achilles heel of information security for federal agencies," said Cindy Auten, general manager of the Telework Exchange. "They tend to engage in risky behavior, often because they don't know the risks exist."

Risks include carrying hard-copy files home, logging onto an agency's network remotely or working on agency laptop computers that lack encryption or antivirus protection.



# Home





**Above:** Debora Ellis, an HR program specialist, says she likes teleworking because it “lets me make the most of my workday by focusing on work goals in a suitable alternative work environment and avoid traffic.” **Below:** Susan Frost, an HR program specialist, said that when she began teleworking she had to adjust to using the fob and to other technical challenges, but found the “quiet location without the usual office sounds made it easy to concentrate on complex projects.”



### **Two Criteria**

The Department has two telework eligibility criteria: Is the position eligible? Is the person in the position eligible?

A position is eligible unless it always deals with classified material or always requires face-to-face contact with clients daily. Domestic employees who believe they are eligible should seek their manager’s approval of a telework agreement, soon to be available via the telework page of the Bureau of Human Resources HR Online Web site, <http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/prd/hronline/main.cfm>, along with other telework information. The employee and manager must sign the agreement, which specifies the location, days and hours the employee will telework.

# Work

Heather Stokes, an HR program analyst, says teleworking means "I can get my workday started sooner since I save a tremendous amount of time from my commute, and that means I can spend more time in the evening with my family."

Some jobs are difficult to telework. Employees such as security guards do work that can only be done on-site. These exceptions aside, however, managers have much flexibility in deciding who can telework. For example, many employees who work with classified material also work with unclassified information and can do all of their unclassified work, say, one day a week. Receptionists might seem to have jobs that won't fit telework, but often they have collateral duties they can do off-site and a person at the office who can back them up.

Of the two types of telework, the most-used version is called core telework. It involves at least one day a week during which the employee works at a location other than his or her regular office. The other type is situational telework, which means working at an alternate location at least once every month but not on a fixed schedule.

Most of the Department's teleworkers access their e-mail remotely, using the OpenNet Everywhere system. ONE access is gained through a key fob that generates a one-time-use access code to log onto the Department's computers and requires a broadband Internet connection. The Department funds core teleworkers centrally for ONE access, whereas situational teleworkers are funded by their bureaus. This difference exists because the Department is particularly interested in supporting and encouraging once-a-week telework.



#### Hard Workers

Teleworkers are likely to be among the Department's best employees. They are self-starters who are results-driven, customer-oriented and always available via e-mail, thanks to their ONE fobs. Managers often find they have more contact with teleworkers by phone and e-mail on their telework days than when these employees are in the office. Managers, in fact, may find their computers' e-mail signal chiming all day as their teleworkers send in what they've produced.

The Department plans to launch an online system to further promote telework. The system, eTelework, automates the appli-

cation process and more easily provides statistics and reports on telework for Congress and the Office of Personnel Management. (See sidebar.)

HR's Office of Employee Relations encourages supervisors to consider telework, which can be done from home or at one of the several federal telecommuting centers in the Washington, D.C., region. Questions about telework can be directed to HR/ER's telework coordinator, Heather Stokes, at (202) 261-8178. ■

*The author is a division chief in the Bureau of Human Resources' Employee Relations Office.*

## eTELEWORK ON THE WEB

### TELEWORK ENROLLMENT PROCESS GOES ONLINE **BY ED WARNER**

Domestic employees who wish to sign up to telework will soon be able to do so using an online system recently tested by the Bureau of Human Resources.

Called eTelework, the system is based on an online telework agreement form that is routed through the approval process electronically, much like the DS-755 Request for Training form. The employee and supervisor will receive e-mail notifications as each approval step is completed. The agreement becomes part of the employee's electronic Official Personnel Folder, also available online.

Going to an online system also

allows HR to easily and more accurately gather data on telework within the Department. Once deployed throughout the Department, eTelework is expected to greatly facilitate congressional reporting requirements.

The eTelework form will soon be available to domestic employees at <https://hrweb.hr.state.gov/prd/hronline/main.cfm>. HR also has a telework Web page that answers frequently asked questions and details the steps an employee must take to start teleworking. That page is at <http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/prd/hrweb/er/employment/TC/Telecommute.html>.

*Ed Warner is the deputy editor of State Magazine.*







# *Discovering America*

INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY  
PROMOTES PUBLIC DIPLOMACY  
**BY BRIDGET GERSTEN**



Dmitriy Klimientev shows Special English projects to Russian teachers.



As more and more Russians go online, the U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok has sought manageable ways to help Russians learn about the American experience and gain cultural information, all at the click of a mouse. Voice of America's Special English proved the perfect tool.

What's so special about Special English? Special English is spoken at two-thirds the rate of broadcast-style English, using a core vocabulary of 1,500 words. This makes the language more accessible to listeners, giving them easier access, for example, to the content of a report. The VOA Web site also features a program called "Wordmaster," featuring interviews about the novelties and peculiarities of American English and its use as an international language. There are several places on the VOA Web site where listeners can listen to and read information online or download MP3 files and accompanying text.

Special English programs are popular across the globe and cover a range of American cultural topics and current events. The most popular feature is said to be the weekly 15-minute

program "The Making of a Nation," a five-year-long American history series. There are also programs about life in America, famous Americans, the U.S. education system and American arts and culture, including popular culture and short stories. Other programs, such as the "Economics Report," often focus on issues involving the United States, and there is a five-minute feature, "Words and Their Stories," that explores popular idioms in American English.

#### ***CD-ROM Solution***

Using multimedia presentations created by Russian students on such topics as the electoral college, Wall Street, Chinatowns and Halloween, and featuring MP3 files and interactive activities, the consulate general partnered with the U.S. Embassy in Moscow's English Language Office, a university and a high school to make CD-ROMs of 30 of the presentations and distributed them to classrooms across Russia. The effort sought to show the mosaic of American culture, as reflected by Special English reports, and to expose a broad audience to the wealth of material available free online on American culture, international news and the quirks of American English.



# “Suddenly, America no longer seemed to be so unbelievably far away.”

Later, the post expanded the project to include a second volume of culture-based presentations, plus a step-by-step handbook in Russian and English showing students and teachers how to make their own projects about their local needs or on topics in science and technology, the U.S. presidential elections and other matters. The post demonstrated the American culture and language projects at public diplomacy outreach events, working with American Centers and Corners, Fulbright English teaching assistants and English language fellows.

The VOA site made it easy to integrate technology into public diplomacy outreach. Gone are the days when American news and feature programs were only on VOA radio and only at specific hours. In the old days, VOA was the best source of information behind the Iron Curtain, and embassies provided the *Special English Word Book* and other materials on audiotape to visitors overseas. Now, any country's citizens simply need an Internet connection to access American culture online through VOA.

At one of the post's partners on the project, Kursk State University, Professor Dmitriy Klimientev said he first heard Special English in 1983 in the Soviet Union when he was 14 and had tuned in to VOA. Access to English language broadcasts remained limited even during perestroika, in the 1990s.

## Discovering America

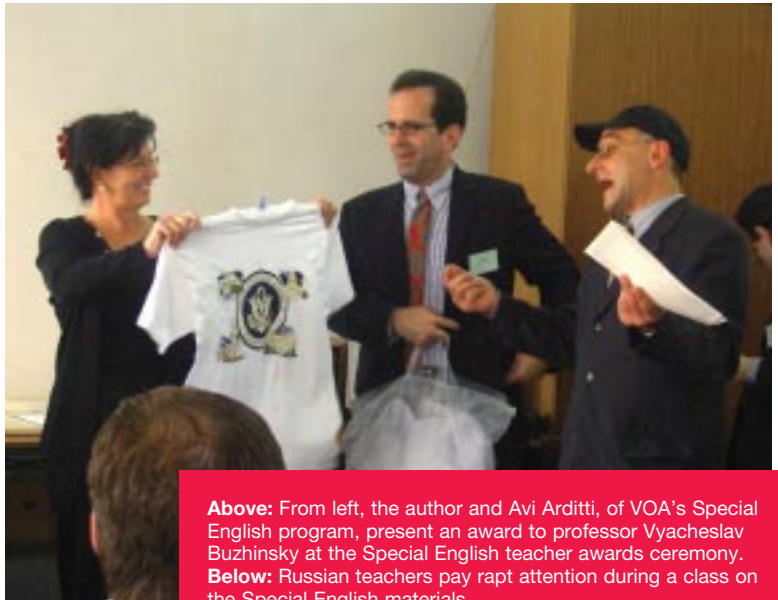
“It was by first using Special English that I discovered America's language, people, history, traditions, stories and so much more,” he said. “Suddenly, America no longer seemed to be so unbelievably far away. Now that the programs are on the Web, I have downloaded more than 700 VOA Special English and 200 regular programs.”

One of his students, Julia Katsva, said, “The main advantage of Special English is we can find interesting and touching information each day, about different spheres of American life; it's our best source of free, authentic materials.”

Katsva said she first started listening to the Special English program two years ago, then used it to teach English, for pleasure, to be aware of international news and learn more about the United States.

When she first visited the United States, she said, “I realized that I was familiar with a lot of American expressions, idioms and turns of phrase, thanks to Special English.”

Public diplomacy is difficult in the vast Russian Far East, an area with four time zones and two-thirds as large as the continental United States. The solution was to provide as many schools as possible with the interactive “Listen + Read + Learn” CD and a new multimedia textbook series created in Russia, titled *American Potpourri*, that includes training material based on VOA Special English texts and audio files. Special English world



**Above:** From left, the author and Avi Arditti, of VOA's Special English program, present an award to professor Vyacheslav Buzhinsky at the Special English teacher awards ceremony. **Below:** Russian teachers pay rapt attention during a class on the Special English materials.



news broadcasts are available all year, and VOA strives to meet high journalistic standards on U.S. and international issues.

Free program transcripts and MP3s are available at [www.voaspecialenglish.com](http://www.voaspecialenglish.com), as are video reports and a VOA satellite television program guide. The project handbook is available in Russian and in English on the consulate general's Web site, <http://vladivostok.usconsulate.gov/elf.html>. ■

*The author is public affairs officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok.*

Kuchta-Helbling served her rotation in the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration.



## TANGIBLE LINKS

ROTATION EXPANDS PROFESSIONAL HORIZONS

**BY CATHERINE KUCHTA-HELBLING**

State Department officials need solid bilateral and multilateral experience to address complex foreign policy challenges and seize global opportunities. The Civil Service Mid-Level Rotational Program offers Civil Service employees the chance to learn how another bureau's work meshes with that of their home bureau and how it all fits into the Department's mission. My participation in the rotation program has mutually benefited the Department and me.

I joined the Department four years ago as an American Association for the Advancement of Science Diplomacy Fellow.

This program brings scientists into government agencies to learn about the policy world and to use science to improve policy-making. I had academic and programmatic experience in democratization and was thrilled to be able to address this issue from a diplomatic perspective in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. After a year and a half, I was hired as a permanent Civil Service employee. During my three years in DRL, I covered portfolios in Europe, Central Asia and South Asia and mentored some of the junior staff.

But I realized that I needed to continue

broadening my horizons. Having only served in one bureau, I envied my Foreign Service and Presidential Management Fellow colleagues who served in other U.S. government agencies and posts. While democracy and human rights issues are integral to U.S. foreign policy, I wanted experience in promoting a wider range of U.S. foreign policy priorities from a different perspective. I was, therefore, very excited about joining the first year of the rotation program, which offers Civil Service employees a chance to rotate into one-year assignments elsewhere in the Department.



Of the six rotation possibilities, I wanted one that was likely to let me learn new issues and skills while my host bureau benefited from my experience. The position in the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration's Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Relations was exactly what I was looking for. Rather than being responsible for a specific set of issues for a handful of countries, I got the chance to delve into the multilateral world and join a team managing the United States' global approach to protecting refugees and resolving refugee problems.

The link between refugee protection and democracy and human rights promotion is tangible. Many, but not all, refugee flows emanate from countries or regions that lack respect for universal human rights and the democratic institutions that resolve disputes peacefully. In DRL, I worked closely with my colleagues at PRM and the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, to help protect Uzbek refugees and asylum seekers who had fled to Kyrgyzstan after the bloody Andijon crackdown. Assisting refugees and promoting democracy and human rights are well-established components of U.S. foreign policy and long-standing American values. Both are vital antidotes to repression, suffering and potential extremism, and are

## The Civil Service rotation program helps Civil Service employees develop the tools and skills to become effective diplomats.

instrumental in the quest to protect the United States by promoting human dignity and liberty worldwide.

In PRM, I was part of a team that formulated and promoted U.S. policy regarding refugee protection and assistance through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. I used my DRL grants-management skills to oversee PRM's contribution to UNHCR, but quickly learned that managing country or regional democracy projects was different from helping manage the U.S. funding and policy relationship with one of the Department's largest multilateral partners. PRM provided more than \$363 million to UNHCR in fiscal 2007. This prompted me to become proficient in technologies to track and allocate finances.

One of my responsibilities was to monitor UNHCR's progress in meeting U.S. goals. Here, I enlisted my social science and DRL background to devise indicators to measure and track progress while being exposed to novel methodologies such as the Sphere Project, which measures whether disaster

assistance meets established minimum standards. PRM and UNHCR representatives assess UNHCR's progress twice a year, and I prepared for and participated in one of these meetings and in a UNHCR Standing Committee meeting in Geneva on refugee protection. There I experienced firsthand the challenges and rewards of multilateral diplomacy and saw how these efforts were distinct from but complemented by bilateral initiatives.

From my perspective, the Civil Service rotation program helps Civil Service employees develop the tools and skills to become effective diplomats. My DRL and PRM experiences will serve me well in my current detail from DRL to the National Security Council as director for democracy and human rights, where I will also backstop my colleagues on refugee and international organization issues.

---

*The author is in the directorate on democracy, human rights, refugees and international organizations at the National Security Council.*

## GETTING A GREAT DEAL MANAGERS SAY ROTATIONAL PROGRAM HAS MANY BENEFITS **BY ED WARNER**



To some, it may sound like a rotten deal: A manager swaps a trusted and bright mid-level employee for someone he or she doesn't know of equal rank who will work there only a year.

In fact, the Civil Service Mid-level Rotational Program "is not a rotten deal—at first or later on," said Margaret Pollack, who supervised Catherine Kuchta-Helbling under the program. Kuchta-Helbling came to Pollack's office in the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, and Pollack said she brought

Margaret Pollack is an office director in the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration.

# BREAKING NEW GROUND

JOB ROTATION BROADENS CIVIL SERVICE PERSPECTIVES **BY STUART DENYER**

Sitting at a desk appearing to date to the 1940s, I stared at my gray secure phone and wondered why it wasn't ringing. The week before, I was still in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, where the phone rang often. But this week I had just started my one-year Civil Service mid-level rotation in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, excited by the opportunity to do a rotation dealing with diplomatic affairs.

I had done a rotation in 2004 in the Office of the Executive Secretariat's Operations Center, but in that operational job I had regular contact with CA. Being an INR analyst would be quite different. Having had only minor interaction with INR previously, I envisioned the job meant reading pages of transcripts of intercepts involving someone who had heard thirdhand about a bomb being built. I was pleased to discover that INR analysts follow the subjects of interest to them and the issues they see as most important.

## FITTING IN

Would I, an operational person, fit into in the brainy world of INR? Weren't they the people who wore striped ties with plaid shirts and, like me, wore hats to work? Silly preconceptions aside, what most amazed me about my INR colleagues was that they read reports, identified the trends and then said, "Based on my 30 years of covering this country portfolio," the answer is not what it seems.

How could a new employee without that background contribute? For me, the secret was finding an area that I was passionate about. In previous Department positions, I worked largely on Africa or South Asia. In the INR role, I was to be assigned a portfolio focusing on Western Europe. Therefore, I talked to my future supervisor about the plan and told him, instead, of my interest in the western Balkans. He added not only Romania, but also Albania, Croatia, Macedonia and—perhaps my

favorite country—tiny Montenegro to my portfolio. While others might have cringed when asked to take on extra countries their first week on the job, I went home with new enthusiasm.

There were some amusing adjustments. We work in an area affectionately known as the second floor "cell block," where visitors from the outside can't enter via the second floor. Here officers still share printers and use removable hard drives. I also missed having my personal digital assistant, which I couldn't bring into the office. In fact, I would have to have my Department-issued award plaques scanned before I could hang them in my new office. There were also a dizzying number of arcane document classifications, some of which sounded like something needed to enter a boy's tree house.

The hallways were hushed, but inside the offices the intellectual ruminations about broad world events were stimulating. While

useful skills, particularly in evaluation methods.

But Pollack said the program isn't just good for the offices that receive participants. It's good for supervisors, who "need new people who have new ideas, or you run the risk of going stale." It's also a great opportunity for the employee whom the office sends into the program to share his or her talents and skills, Pollack said.

"As managers of Civil Service employees, we must always be challenging our staff to find new opportunities at which to excel—and for us as managers to mentor and develop skills," she observed.

Looking back on the first year of the program, managers say it brought them quick-learning hard workers with what one manager called the "fresh eyes" to assess challenges. That manager, Bob Nash of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, said the employee who recently finished a rotation with his

office was a very fast learner.

"I wish there was some way we could keep him," Nash enthused about Stuart Denyer, who came from the Bureau of Consular Affairs to cover the Balkan nations for INR.

Although an office must give up an employee to the program in order to get someone, Nash said doing so was hard because his office, the Southern Europe Division of the Office of Analysis for Europe, is shorthanded, and no office can take on newcomers without experiencing downtime while the newbie learns the ropes.

On the other hand, he said Denyer took over a big job that was previously filled by someone who could work only half-time. "He bailed us out of a jam," Nash said.

"Fast learner" is a phrase often applied to program participants, according to Paul Lawrence, who administers the program as chief of the Career Development Division in the Bureau of Human Resources. The program, which serves GS-12 and -13 employees, chooses self-starters because "nobody's going to hold your hand," Nash said. The program's 2008 class of 10, chosen from among 24 applicants, started work in January.

*Ed Warner is the deputy editor of State Magazine.*

**It's a great opportunity for the employee whom the office sends into the program to share his or her talents and skills.**



visiting colleagues at other intelligence agencies, I sometimes felt I was on a movie set. It was fascinating to be in INR at a time when the whole intelligence establishment was reexamining how it can function as a community.

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Perhaps hardest was wondering how to make a difference in the world. In CA, it's easy to see tangible accomplishments and quick results. For instance, I once conducted liaison between an embassy, a family in the United States, an insurance company and an air ambulance company to get a desperately ill American flown home safely from a post in Africa. Now, I have to be mindful that in INR, although the classified assessments I write are read by a rather narrow group, some of those readers are the top people who move foreign policy. INR analysts have much latitude to tell it how it is. I wrote a

## The Civil Service Rotation Program let me break into the world of Balkan diplomacy, which might have been hard to broach through simply applying for a position.

recent assessment that may have helped refocus policymakers on a growing dispute that needed diplomatic attention. I wish I could discuss it further, but you know what they say in the intelligence business.

The Civil Service Rotational program let me break into the world of Balkan diplomacy, which might have been hard to broach through simply applying for a position. The rotation is based on the premise that Civil Service officers, like Foreign

Service officers, can be generalists who are able to take up new issues with ease and quickly contribute their foreign affairs and communication skills.


Traditionally, bureaus jealously guard their experienced employees, but in the larger sense, a workforce with breadth helps the Department win. ■

---

*The author is a foreign affairs officer in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research.*



Stuart Denyer shows off a typewriter in INR dating to World War II.



Mrs. Laura Bush attends an English Access Microscholarship recruitment event at the Ministry of Education's training facility in Kuwait City, Kuwait.

# Growing Awareness

FIRST LADY SPOTLIGHTS DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS WITH MIDDLE EAST VISIT

BY RENA PEDERSON

With help from First Lady Laura Bush, several State Department programs in the Middle East gained increased media coverage in October, from “Good Morning America” to the *Arab News*.

Mrs. Bush’s four-country tour of the Middle East helped raise awareness of the US-Middle East Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research, an initiative she launched in June 2006. She also brought special attention to the work of the Department’s English Access Microscholarship Program in Kuwait.

“Having the First Lady advocating for these programs shines a much brighter spotlight [on them],” said Erin Walsh, senior adviser in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. “The response has been phenomenal.”

Kathleen Parker, a syndicated columnist who covered the trip, said the First Lady’s presence carried a “wallop in terms of moral support and influence.” Parker wrote that breast cancer awareness had become a vehicle for women’s empowerment in the region.

“Mrs. Bush’s visit to these countries has been a boost for women hoping to gain traction amid ancient customs,” she said.

## Breast Cancer Awareness

Dr. Samia al-Amoudi, a Saudi gynecologist diagnosed with breast cancer last year, told the Associated Press, “No campaigns, ads or

programs would have had the kind of impact that Laura Bush’s trip has given to breast cancer awareness in the kingdom.”

In the Middle East about 70 percent of breast cancer cases are not reported until they are at a very late stage, compared with 30 percent or fewer in the United States. In her remarks at the Sheikh Khalifa Medical Center in Abu Dhabi, Mrs. Bush noted that spreading the word about early detection is especially urgent in the Middle East.

“The number of breast cancer cases is on the rise, and the disease increasingly affects younger women,” she said.

Seeds for the historic health partnership were planted two years ago in Qassim, Saudi Arabia, at a meeting between Walsh and the women of the King Abdul Aziza Women’s Association. The association had recently launched a breast cancer awareness campaign and faced many of the same obstacles American women encountered 25 years ago. Learning of these similarities, the women of Qassim asked if they could connect with American organizations that have led the charge in awareness, treatment and research of breast cancer.

## Initiative Launched

One year later, as a response to these calls, Mrs. Bush launched





Mrs. Bush helps Balkes Nafe put together a puzzle during a visit with young patients in the children's playroom at the King Hussein Medical Center, Amman, Jordan. Also pictured are Princess Ghida Talal, left, and Princess Dina Mired bin Ra'ad.

the US-Middle East Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research. The partnership involves The University of Texas' M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, the Susan G. Komen for the Cure advocacy organization and advocacy and medical organizations in the Middle East. Individualized programs are being implemented in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates with the support of the Middle East Partnership Initiative.

MEPI is a presidential initiative to promote political, economic and educational reform, and empower women in the Middle East and North Africa. More information can be found at [www.mepi.state.gov](http://www.mepi.state.gov).

During her trip, Mrs. Bush announced that the U.S. Agency for International Development would support the expansion of the US-Middle East Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research to the Palestinian territories, Egypt and Morocco.

"I am happy to announce that the US-Middle East Partnership will reach more women," she said.

Mrs. Bush's trip was supported by intra-bureau teamwork by

## BREAST CANCER OUTREACH EFFORTS

### VISITORS PROGRAM FOLLOWS UP ON FIRST LADY'S VISIT

Following Mrs. Bush's trip, the Department's International Visitor Leadership program reinforced breast cancer outreach to the Middle East by bringing 18 women to the United States to meet with health leaders. The women—physicians, health professionals and breast cancer survivors—met with Department officials in

Washington, D.C., and traveled to Houston, Dallas, San Diego and New York.

In Dallas, they met with former U.S. Ambassadors James Oberwetter (Saudi Arabia 2004–2007) and Robert Jordan (Saudi Arabia 2001–2003). They also met with cancer survivor groups at Presbyterian Hospital and the Komen Foundation

offices. In Houston, they toured M.D. Anderson Hospital, and in San Diego, they participated in a 14-mile walk to benefit breast cancer research, again generating considerable news coverage.

The participants came from Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

MEPI, the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and USAID.

#### Microscholarships

In Kuwait City, Mrs. Bush, a former teacher and librarian met with teachers and students who praised the Department's English language initiative, the English Access Microscholarship Program. Teenage boys and girls told her the program's activities boosted their self-confidence and gave them an appreciation of American culture, including baseball and Thanksgiving.

"It made a whole new person out of me," one teenager, Hadeer al-Mutairi, said.

"English has become a common global language, in fields from science and technology to diplomacy and business," Mrs. Bush noted. "By helping students in the Middle East and in other regions improve their skills in English, these microscholarships equip young people to compete for better jobs, achieve higher degrees and vie for scholarships in universities around the world."

The English Access Microscholarship Program gives ordinary 14- to 18-year-old students the opportunity to study English and participate in enrichment activities designed to improve their appreciation for American democratic principles, civic engagement, history, culture and values and enhance their educational and employment opportunities and strengthen their ability to contribute to the development of their societies. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' program has reached 32,000 teenage students in 50 countries since its inception in 2004. MEPI has contributed \$16 million to the program for implementation in the Middle East and North Africa. ■

*The author is special assistant for strategic communications in the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.*

# Arts and Minds



Gathered in the office of ECA Supervisory Program Officer Colombia A. Barros, far right, are, from left, Leanne Mella, Evangeline J. Montgomery, Jill Staggs, Kathryn Wainscott, Marisa Benson, Markita Brooks, Catherine D. Staples and Susan Cohen.

Many a great success story is preceded by an equally inspiring comeback story. Remember Tina Turner or the 2004 Boston Red Sox? Such a tale of beating the odds can be told of U.S. cultural diplomacy. In the past six years, the budget for cultural programs in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has grown sevenfold, which is a testament to these programs' strength and potential to transform societies.

"Cultural programs are powerful ways to implement the Secretary's Transformational Diplomacy goal of engaging foreign citizens and their governments," said Alina L. Romanowski, deputy assistant secretary for professional and cultural exchanges.

Posts also believe cultural programming effectively advances Mission Performance Plan goals and communicates American values to foreign audiences, according to reporting cables and requests for more cultural offerings.

ECA has transformed its existing cultural programs, created new ones and developed strong partnerships with the private sector. The 10-member staff of the ECA Cultural Programs Division's Office of Citizen Exchanges manages exchanges and presentations worldwide in the performing arts, visual arts and film.

ECA uses technology and innovative art forms, such as rap and hip-hop, to reach young audiences. Recently, the hip-hop and Latin fusion music group Ozomatli played to enthusiastic crowds of more than 12,000 in Kathmandu and thousands more in Jordan, Tunisia, Egypt and India, drawing rave reviews and positive media coverage. Sponsored in part through an ECA Performing Arts Initiative grant, Ozomatli, a multicultural group, also visited orphanages and participated in student roundtable discussions and multiple jam sessions.

## Partnerships

The 2006 President's Global Cultural Initiative partners ECA with major arts institutions and the U.S. cultural agencies to let foreign artists collaborate with the best American artists and creative work being produced today. Under the initiative, ECA is working with the National Endowment for the Arts on the Big Read project, in which communities join together in reading a novel, and which will go international soon.

Another partner, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, manages the ECA Cultural Visitors program for performing artists, who spend two to four weeks in collaborative workshops

CULTURAL PROGRAMS POWER TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY  
BY JULIA GOMEZ-NELSON AND DANIEL SCHUMAN





**Clockwise from above:** An exhibition of photographs of historic buildings in New York draws a crowd to the new U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Cultural Envoy Pancho Romero of New Mexico State University teaches trumpet technique to a young Colombian student. Evangeline J. Montgomery is an ECA program development specialist in the visual arts.



with U.S. artists. ECA and U.S. embassies also assist the Kennedy Center in building the management capacity of arts organizations in the Arab world.

Because much of America’s image abroad comes from Hollywood, presenting international audiences with a broader range of American films is central to conveying a more balanced view of the United States. ECA, in partnership with U.S. cultural agencies and the American Film Institute, created the AFI Project 20/20 filmmaker exchange to bring American and foreign independent filmmakers together. The project has gone to 14 cities in eight countries.

Keeping pace with public diplomacy priorities, ECA has transformed its cultural programming to foster collaboration and dialogue between U.S. and foreign artists and audiences.

The bureau has also updated a 25-year-old program to include new community outreach and educational programs such as the “Museum & Community Collaborations Abroad” project, which involves competitive grants to four U.S. museums to work with partner institutions in Bolivia, Mexico, India, South Africa and Tajikistan.

**Evolving Collaboration**

The collaboration between ECA and the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa has evolved from a residency for about 30 foreign writers to include opportunities for U.S. writers to discuss their work with foreign readers. In 2008, the program will add “Between the Lines,” an intensive two-week workshop at the

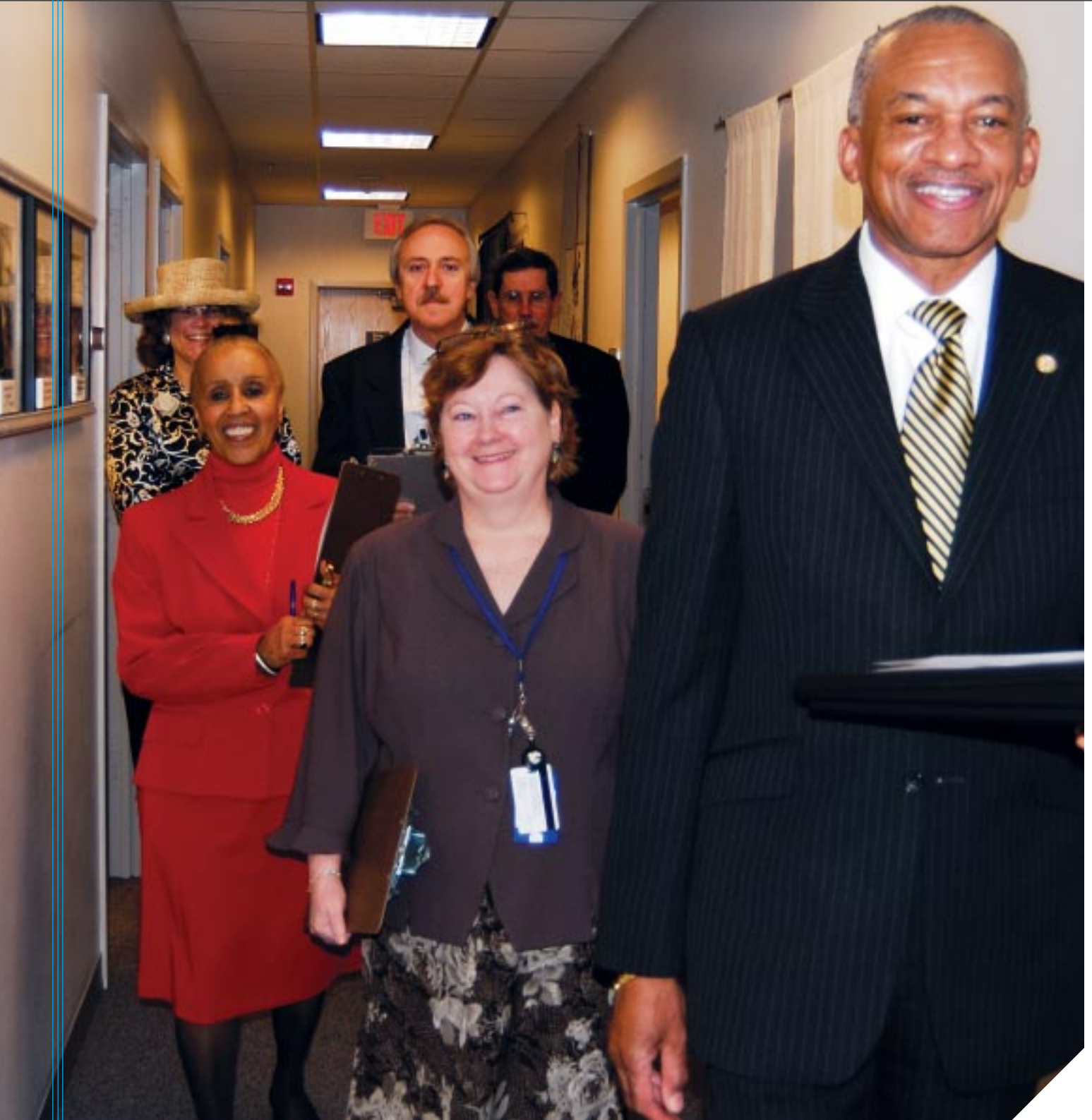
university for 12 teenaged, Arabic-speaking writers.

ECA’s music and visual arts presentations have also evolved. The bureau has included new urban music in The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program and is also taking U.S. biennial presentations beyond galleries by organizing public programs for students and young artists.

The newest ECA cultural initiatives cultivate links with young artists and audiences by supporting creativity and talent in middle school, high school and university students. The Citi Global Encounters program uses music as a window on other cultures. New York’s Carnegie Hall developed a high school-level instruction program based on traditional Turkish music in a distance-learning exchange. The exchange, which involved 900 students in eight New York City high school classrooms and eight classrooms in Istanbul, Turkey, included a concert held via videoconference featuring renowned musicians from both countries.

During the Cold War, the sound of American jazz pierced the darkness of the Iron Curtain and illuminated the hearts and minds of those hungering for freedom. Cultural diplomacy changes as a society’s culture evolves, and its strength resides in its ability to reach beyond generations, language, politics and borders to demonstrate our common humanity. For more information, visit <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/citizens/culture/index.htm>. ■

*Julia Gomez-Nelson is the senior adviser to the deputy assistant secretary for professional and cultural exchanges, and Daniel Schuman was chief of ECA’s Cultural Programs Division in 2004–2006.*



# High Standards

BOARD OF EXAMINERS BUILDS FOREIGN SERVICE'S NEXT GENERATION **BY JOE RUTH**

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANASTASIOS KOSES



Over the years, many Foreign Service officers have marveled at the ability and skills of more-junior colleagues, and some have even wondered, "Would I be competitive for today's Foreign Service?" Credit for the hiring of these capable new colleagues goes to the State Department's Board of Examiners.

BEX, a division of the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment, selects the next generation of FSOs and Foreign Service specialists. Most BEX employees work in a rabbit warren on the first floor of State Annex-1, fondly referred to as "Lower Bexistan." Others work on the fifth floor, or Upper Bexistan, and still others in Southwest Washington in SA-44, or Outer Bexistan. BEX tests candidates at SA-1 and SA-44, but hopes to administer all tests in SA-44 starting in the summer of 2008, when it moves to new offices there.

The examination process has evolved over the years as the Department seeks to attract candidates from a wider pool and to ensure the exam accurately and fairly determines who is right for the Foreign Service. BEX helped design the new FSO selection process, which debuted with the September 2007 written exam. It is expected to improve

the Department's ability to compete with the private sector for personnel and to hire personnel more quickly.

The new process involves a "total candidate approach," which means an assessment of the candidate's resume and a computer-based written test. A Qualifications Evaluation Panel of BEX staff reviews the files of candidates who have passed the test and the essay, which is used to assess a candidate's writing ability. The panel evaluates those results, along with the candidate's resume and personal narrative, the six mini-essays submitted as part of the registration process, and decides who moves forward to the oral assessment.

On days when BEX administers the oral exam, its staff moves quickly from the group exercise to candidate interviews to reading written exercises

over lunch before giving candidates their assessment results. Exam days are the most fun because the staff interacts closely with candidates, trying to get a sense of how they would function as Foreign Service officers or specialists.

## At a Glance

**Office name**  
Board of Examiners of the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment

**Symbol**  
HR/REE/BEX

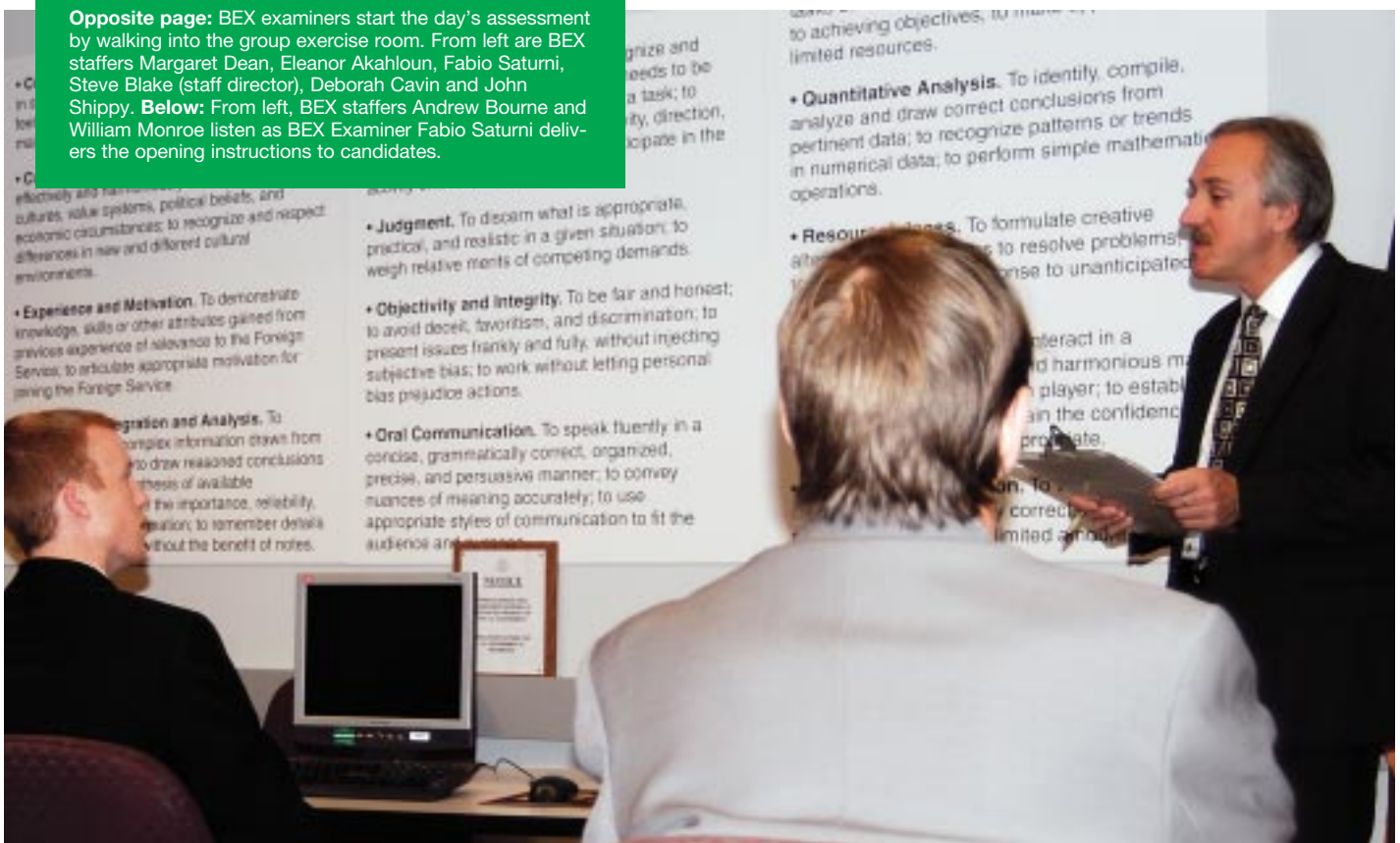
**Office Director**  
Stephen J. Blake

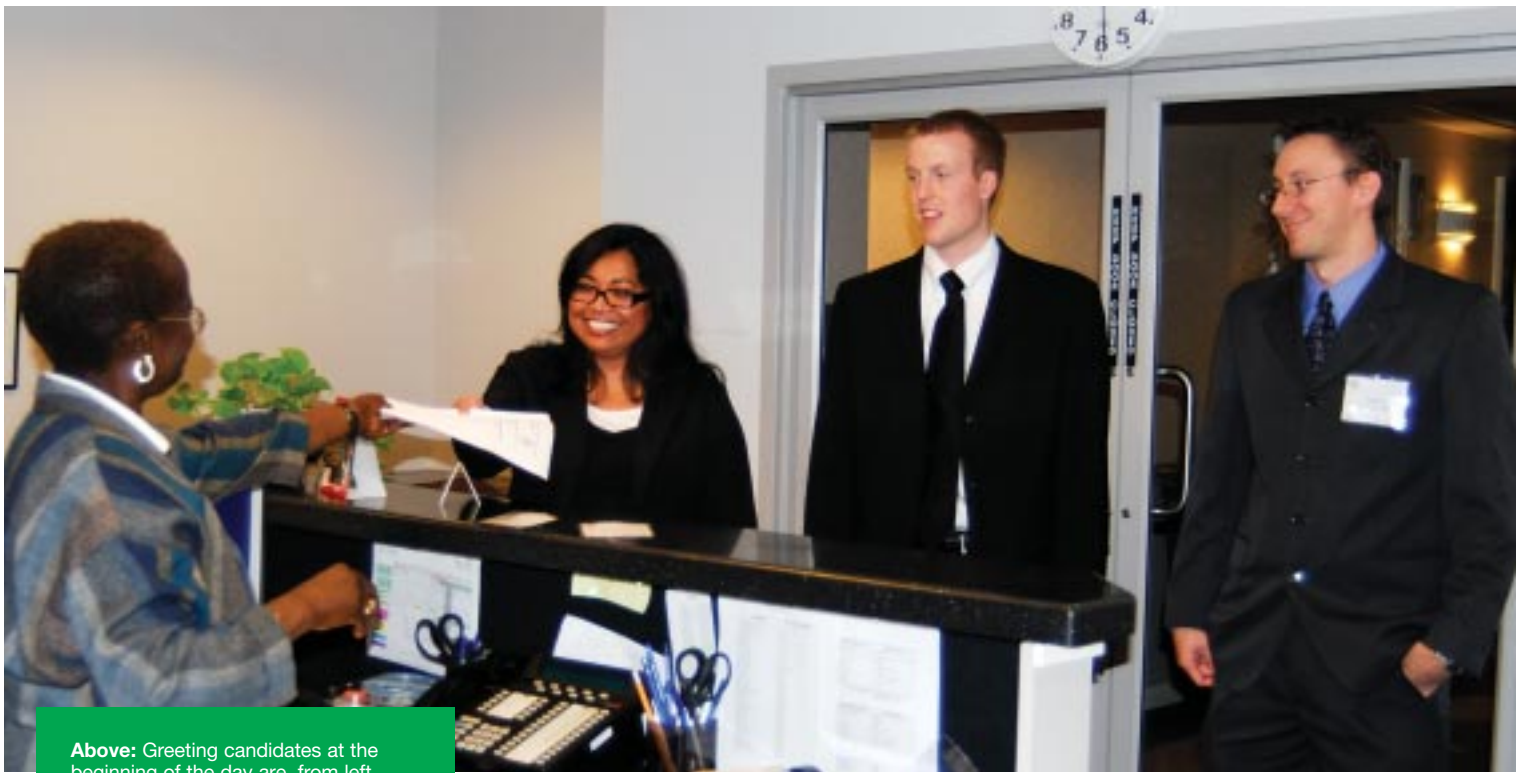
**Staff size**  
36

**Office Location**  
SA-1 and SA-44

**Web site**  
[www.careers.state.gov](http://www.careers.state.gov)

**Opposite page:** BEX examiners start the day's assessment by walking into the group exercise room. From left are BEX staffers Margaret Dean, Eleanor Akahloun, Fabio Saturni, Steve Blake (staff director), Deborah Cavin and John Shippy. **Below:** From left, BEX staffers Andrew Bourne and William Monroe listen as BEX Examiner Fabio Saturni delivers the opening instructions to candidates.





**Above:** Greeting candidates at the beginning of the day are, from left, BEX staffers Edna Jones, Lorelei-Astrid Bassi, Andrew Bourne and Marvin Moore. **Right:** Program Assistant Kelly Parker distributes materials for the case management exercise.

### The Challenge

Most candidates are intelligent, knowledgeable and articulate. The challenge, therefore, is to determine whether they are also leaders and managers, and whether they exercise good judgment and good people skills under pressure. The most exhilarating days are when BEX staff find several successful candidates. However, every day also requires that bad news be given to others.

A highlight of a tour in BEX is a two-week off-site assessment somewhere outside the Beltway, perhaps in Chicago, San Francisco, Phoenix or Austin, Texas. These off-sites often test flexibility and ingenuity when technology or weather poses challenges that must be resolved at a distance from the support services in Washington, D.C.

When it comes to telecommuting, BEX is HR's biggest user of computer fobs, which allow employees to log onto OpenNet and work from home and, most important, from the off-site locations.

BEX staff have many interesting and challenging duties. They review candidates'



files for final suitability, once the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Office of Medical Services have approved the candidate. They also create new test materials, rule on salary appeals, serve on promotion or tenure panels, oversee contracts, work with well-informed information technology staff on computer enhancements and support outreach and recruitment.

### High Standards

Getting an assignment in BEX is not easy; all candidates are carefully vetted. Most FSOs come to BEX on one-year tours, although many extend. Gone are the days when FSOs could spend a few months in BEX while awaiting a plum assignment. All examiners must now be certified by completing annual training led by

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANASTASIOS MOSES





**Above:** In a role-playing exercise are, from left, BEX staffers Josef Ruth; Andrew Bourne, playing the role of a successful candidate; Margaret Dean and Deborah Cavin. **Left:** This cartoon, from the *American Foreign Service Journal* of 1925, shows how, although the oral assessment has changed, candidates are still under pressure.



industrial psychologists, experienced examiners and subject-matter experts from such offices as MED and the Office of Legal Affairs.

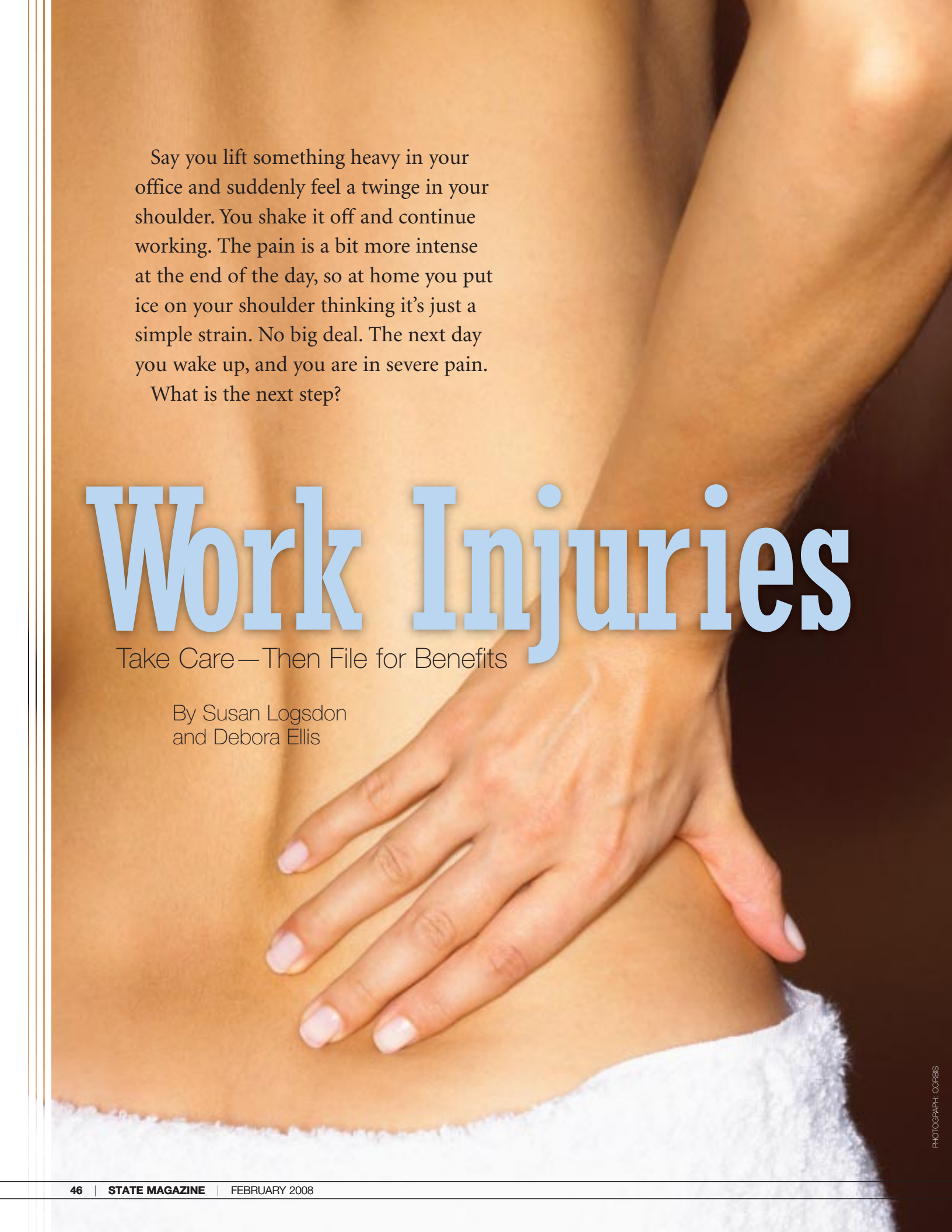
BEX's horizontal structure is unusual. All staff take turns leading, whether on an assessment panel, a final review panel or a special project. From its former ambassadors

at the minister-counselor level through its cluster of counselors and FS-1s and -2s, the BEX staff all rotate through the same duties. For many, it is a refreshing change from the standard embassy or office structure. Serving in BEX is also a terrific opportunity to get to know colleagues from other career fields and bureaus.

The BEX team includes program assistants, who schedule the candidates and work closely with them on assessment days. Foreign Service specialists volunteer to help BEX periodically assess specialist candidates. BEX also uses retired FSOs for surge capacity.

Telecommuting, collegiality and interacting with candidates make BEX a special Washington assignment. The responsibility to select the next generation of FSOs means that the BEX staff influences the future of the Department and the implementation of U.S. foreign policy. The Department needs the best candidates to represent the United States, and BEX needs the best in the Foreign Service to help make those hiring decisions. ■

*The author is an assessor at the Board of Examiners.*



Say you lift something heavy in your office and suddenly feel a twinge in your shoulder. You shake it off and continue working. The pain is a bit more intense at the end of the day, so at home you put ice on your shoulder thinking it's just a simple strain. No big deal. The next day you wake up, and you are in severe pain.

What is the next step?

# Work Injuries

Take Care—Then File for Benefits

By Susan Logsdon  
and Debora Ellis



A visit to the health unit should be your first stop anytime you have health problems that you believe may be work-related. The concern may be a physical pain or suspected exposure to adverse environmental conditions, such as asbestos, infectious disease or indoor pollutants. Even feelings of anxiety or depression that you believe stem from posttraumatic stress should lead you to the health unit or your private doctor.

The health care providers in the Department's Office of Medical Services are prepared to address job-related health and medical issues, whether they arise overseas or in the United States. MED's Occupational Health Unit provides assistance in gathering medical reports and data that can support a workers compensation claim, and is available to assist bureau workers compensation coordinators and overseas posts with workers compensation matters.

**HR Lead**

The Department's workers compensation program is managed and led by HR's Office of Employee Relations, which leads a multidisciplinary team of bureau workers compensation coordinators and post representatives that coordinate with the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs to administer the program for the Department.

MED's health care providers in Washington and overseas include regional medical officers, Foreign Service health practitioners and regional medical officer/psychiatrists. Health care received at health units is free. When needed, referrals are made to health care providers outside the Department. When the medical or mental health issue is job related, Labor's OWCP pays for the medical care after claims are filed and approved. For prompt OWCP service following injuries, claims should be filed within 48 hours.

When an injury or condition is job related, MED's staff will provide the employee with a Workers' Compensation Preparedness Kit and information on filing a claim. The employee must file in order to become immediately eligible for OWCP benefits.

**Apply for Benefits**

Don't overlook any injury or symptom, no matter how small. File the claim forms for OWCP benefits through the bureau coordinator or post representative if there's medical documentation from your health care provider to link your medical condition to work. There are many reasons to apply for OWCP benefits:

- Prompt filing will result in the issuance of a claim number for medical bills and wage loss compensation benefits from OWCP. Employers and private health insurance carriers are not liable for covered expenses.
- For traumatic injuries, employees who are absent for medical reasons become immediately eligible for continuation of pay for up to 45 calendar days from the date of injury and need not use annual or sick leave.
- The full extent of one's injury may not be apparent for some time. OWCP benefits are indefinite once the claim is accepted, and benefits are not limited to a specific time period or dependent on continued employment with the Department.

- If a case is accepted by OWCP and there is a risk of long-term disability, the employee may buy back any annual or sick leave taken for medical-related absences through OWCP.
- Employees should consider disability retirement for permanent disability, but filing a claim will make the employee eligible for OWCP wage loss compensation until they are able to return to work.
- Permanent impairments and the loss of a limb may result in schedule award benefits from OWCP.

If employees accumulate medical bills before their OWCP claims are accepted, their insurance company may pay the initial costs and be reimbursed by OWCP once the claim is accepted. However, health care providers need claim numbers to bill OWCP, and OWCP cannot pay doctors directly or reimburse employees or insurers for bills incurred before the effective date of the claim. Filing claims promptly will help avoid out-of-pocket expenses.

For more detailed information, see the HR Intranet Web site in the intranet, <http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/er/employment/Workcomp/Workcomp.html>. For specific medical help, e-mail MED's occupational health nurse case manager at [MEDoccupationalhealth@state.gov](mailto:MEDoccupationalhealth@state.gov). For policy and administrative questions, e-mail [WorkersCompensation@state.gov](mailto:WorkersCompensation@state.gov).

Some of the frequently asked questions on workers compensation relate to reimbursement, rehabilitation and decisions about returning to work after an injury. For example, if employees accumulate medical bills before their OWCP claims are accepted, their insurance company could pay the initial costs and be reimbursed by OWCP once the claim is accepted. However, health care providers need claim numbers to bill OWCP, and OWCP cannot pay doctors directly or reimburse employees or insurers for bills incurred before the effective date of the claim.

**Clear Communication**

Clear and frequent communication is needed between all parties throughout an employee's treatment and recovery. Work-related injuries or illnesses do not exempt employees from complying with Department rules and regulations on absences. HR/ER and the Department's workers compensation team look at medical work restrictions and make accommodations for short- or long-term disabilities.

Investigating the cause of work-related injuries and health problems is also part of the Workers' Compensation Program, and allows the Department to implement preventive measures. Form DS-1663, Report of Mishap, must be filed to report work injuries and illnesses. This allows the Department to learn valuable lessons about its work environment and preventing job-related health problems. Whether preventing trips, slips and falls when performing duties or spotting posttraumatic stress disorder risk factors early or stopping the spread of communicable disease in the workplace, the workers compensation program is designed to keep the workforce healthy and safe. ■

---

*Susan Logsdon is a registered nurse in MED's Occupational Health Unit and HR/ER's Debora Ellis is the Department coordinator for workers compensation.*

## Student Records Online

Need your class schedule or an unofficial transcript of training taken through FSI? Visit the FSI Registrar's Office web page on the Department of State OpenNet at <http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg>.

## Leadership Training

Leadership training is mandatory for Foreign Service and Civil Service employees at the FS-03/GS-13 levels and above to ensure that they have the necessary preparation for increasing levels of responsibility. FSI's Leadership and Management School offers the required courses to meet these mandatory training requirements and other leadership courses for all FS and GS employees.

## Senior Policy Seminars

FSI's Leadership and Management School offers professional development and policy seminars for senior-level executives of the Department and the foreign affairs/national security community.

For more information contact FSI's Leadership and Management School at (703) 302-6743, [FSILMS@state.gov](mailto:FSILMS@state.gov) or <http://fsiweb.fsi.state.gov/fsi/lms>.

## MANDATORY COURSES

### FS-3/GS-13

PK245 Basic Leadership Skills

### FS-2/GS-14

PT207 Intermediate Leadership Skills

### FS-1/GS-15

PT210 Advanced Leadership Skills

### Managers and Supervisors

PT107 EEO Diversity Awareness for Managers and Supervisors

### Newly promoted FS-OC/SES

PT133 Senior Executive Threshold Seminar

Dates for FSI Transition Center Courses are shown below. For information on all the courses available at FSI, visit the Schedule of Courses on OpenNet at <http://fsi.state.gov>. See Department Notices for announcements of new courses and new course dates and periodic announcements of external training opportunities sponsored by FSI. For additional information, please contact the Office of the Registrar at (703) 302-7144/7137.

### Security

	March	April	Length
MQ911 SOS: Security Overseas Seminar	3,10,24	7,21,28	2D

### Foreign Service Life Skills

	March	April	Length
MQ107 English Teaching Seminar	12		2D
MQ116 Protocol & U.S. Representation Abroad		19	1D
MQ200 Going Overseas Without Children	1		4H
MQ203 Singles in the Foreign Service		23	4H
MQ210 Going Overseas for Families	1		4H
MQ220 Going Overseas—Logistics for Adults	1		4H
MQ230 Going Overseas—Logistics for Children	1		4H
MQ302 Transition to Washington for Foreign-Born Spouses		5	4H
MQ500 Encouraging Resilience in FS Children	26		2.5D
MQ703 Post Options for Employment and Training	20		1D
MQ801 Maintaining Long-Distance Relationships	8		4H
MQ803 Realities of the Foreign Service		11	1D
MQ852 Personal Finances		9	2.5H
MQ855 Traveling with Pets		16	2.5H

### Career Transition Center

	March	April	Length
RV102 Job Search Program	3		60D
RV101 Retirement Planning Seminar		14	4D
RV103 Financial Management & Estate Planning		15	1D
RV104 Annuities, Benefits and Social Security		16	1D

Length: H = Hours, D = Days, W = Weeks

## FasTrac Distance Learning: Learn at Your Own Pace, When and Where You Want!

All State Department employees, FSNs and EFM's are eligible. With your FasTrac password, you may access the entire FasTrac catalog of more than 3,000 courses, from home or office (Intranet or Internet). Courses cover numerous topics, such as project management, computer skills and grammar and writing skills, as

well as soft skills such as leadership. To view the FasTrac catalog, visit the FasTrac Web site at <http://fsi.state.gov/fastrac>.

## FSI Distance Learning

An extensive menu of FSI-developed distance learning courses is also available to eligible participants on the FSI learning management system. See (U) State 009772 dated February 14, 2005, or the FSI web page (Distance Learning) for information.





**U.S. Ambassador to Mauritania**  
**Mark M. Boulware** of Texas, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Previously, he was on the faculty of the National War College. Earlier assignments include Jakarta, Maracaibo, Ouagadougou, Banjul, Gaborone, Bamako, Yaoundé, San Salvador and Rio de Janeiro, where he was consul general. He is married and has three children.



**U.S. Ambassador to Zimbabwe**  
**James D. McGee** of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe. Previously he was ambassador to Madagascar, where he served concurrently as ambassador to the Union of the Comoros, and before that, he was ambassador to Swaziland. His other overseas postings include Lagos, Lahore, The Hague, Bombay, Bridgetown, Kingston and Abidjan. He served in the Air Force in Vietnam, where he earned three Distinguished Flying Crosses.



**U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development**  
**Christopher Egan** of Massachusetts, a businessman and community activist, is the new U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Previously, he was president and a founding member of Carruth Capital, LLC, a commercial real estate investment and development firm. He and his wife founded and direct “Break the Cycle of Poverty,” a nonprofit foundation. He has been a television commentator and documentary producer. He has three children.



**U.S. Ambassador to Eritrea**  
**Ronald K. McMullen** of Iowa, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the State of Eritrea. Previously, he was director of the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. His other overseas postings include Rangoon, Fiji, Cape Town, Libreville, Colombo and Santo Domingo. He also served in Khartoum as a Department intern.



**U.S. Ambassador to Namibia**  
**Gail Dennise Mathieu** of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia. Previously, she was director of the Office of Technical Specialized Agencies in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. Prior to that, she was ambassador to Niger. Her other overseas assignments include Accra, Paris, Geneva, Jeddah, Port of Spain and Santo Domingo. She is married and has a son.



**U.S. Ambassador to Angola**  
**Dan Mozena** of Iowa, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Angola. Previously, he was director of the Office of Southern African Affairs. His other overseas assignments include Lusaka and Kinshasa. He was raised on a dairy farm and helped farmers in Zaire while serving there as a Peace Corps volunteer. He is married.



**U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic**

**Vincent Obsitnik** of Virginia, a business executive, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic. A native of Slovakia, he started a consulting company involved in joint ventures, technology licensing and privatization projects between the United States and Central Europe. Before that, he worked for IBM, Unisys and Litton. He also served on the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad. He is married and has four sons.



**U.S. Ambassador to The Bahamas**

**Ned L. Siegel** of Florida, a businessman and lawyer, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. As a partner in Paramount Residential, LLC, he developed residential communities, custom homes and special-needs communities. He also served as chairman of The Siegel Group, a real estate development and investment firm. He is active in civic, Jewish, education and political causes. He is married and has three children.



**U.S. Ambassador to Gabon and São Tomé and Príncipe**

**Eunice S. Reddick** of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Gabonese Republic, to serve concurrently as Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe. Previously, she was director of the Office of East African Affairs. Her other overseas postings include Harare, Beijing and Taipei. Before joining the Department, she worked for the Africa-America Institute. She is married and has two children.



**U.S. Ambassador to Greece**

**Daniel V. Speckhard** of Wisconsin, a career member of the Senior Executive Service, is the new U.S. Ambassador to Greece. Previously, he was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. Before that, he was director of the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office. He held high-level positions with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and served as U.S. ambassador to Belarus. He also worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development and was a U.S. Senate staffer.

# \* retirements

**FOREIGN SERVICE >>>**

- |                         |                           |                        |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Barmon, Kathleen W.     | Hodai, Kathleen V.        | Slike, George C.       |
| Bauman, John Kenneth    | Holland, Harry J.         | Stanfield, Sylvia G.   |
| Burns, Charlene Ann     | Kelley, Martha Novick     | Suvari, Agu            |
| Burris, Carol P.        | Marshall, William Seibert | Tatge, Robert Osgood   |
| Cadogan, Darwin D.      | Mason-Witt, Linda M.      | Thayer, Scott N.       |
| Cross-Najafi, Rowena R. | McElhaney, Douglas L.     | Tongour, Nadia         |
| Dance, Robert L.        | Morritz, Robin Jan        | Tymeson, Craig S.      |
| Evers, Alan             | O'Bannon, Robert A.       | Wells, Donald Eugene   |
| Farquar, Timothy Scott  | Saylor, Richard G.        | Whitaker, Elizabeth A. |
| Gibson, Gary M.         | Schmid, Patricia A.       | Williams, Gerri L.     |
| Hansen, Eigil V.        | Sensenig, Allegra         | Winship, Robert R.     |
| Heffern, Richard T.     | Sheppard, Margaret        | Wolfson, David Thomas  |
| Hinson, Elizabeth P.    | Dugan                     | Yeaman, Sandra M.      |

**CIVIL SERVICE >>>**

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Batcher, Robert T.    | McCloy Jr., Harry M.   |
| Belliotti, Anthony E. | Phillips, Donna J.     |
| Caudill, Pamela S.    | Plitt, JoAnn R.        |
| Goodwin, Marianne W.  | Twardowski, Blanche E. |
| Kavaliunas, Mary E.   |                        |



**John Hugh Crimmins**, 88, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 12 of heart failure in Mitchellville, Md. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1946. He specialized in Latin America and served as ambassador to the Dominican Republic and Brazil. He retired in 1978 but was called back to the Department to investigate the Jonestown massacre in Guyana.

**Raymond Garo**, 93, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Oct. 22 from natural causes. He served in the Army during World War II and received the Bronze Star. He retired from the Department in 1972.



**Richard John Dols**, 74, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 10 of complications from Parkinson's disease in Midlothian, Va. He served in the Air Force before joining the Department in 1961.

His overseas postings included France, Canada, Swaziland, Niger and New Zealand. After retiring in 1990, he worked as a contractor for the Foreign Service Grievance Board. He enjoyed genealogy, Civil War history and working on his farm.

**John L. Proctor**, 83, a retired Foreign Service employee, died Oct. 30 in Mt. Jackson, Va. He served in the Army during World War II and participated in the D-Day invasion. He retired in 1980 after 35 years with the Department.

**David A. Roberts**, 70, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Nov. 29 in Scituate, Mass., after a brief illness. He served in the Navy before joining the Department. His overseas postings included Amman, Ibadan, The Hague, Calcutta, Colombo, Tunis, Kuala Lumpur, Beijing, Bonn, Jakarta and Lima. After retiring in 1995, he performed many assignments with the Department as a rehired annuitant.

IN THE EVENT OF A DEATH

Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960.

## FSNs – State’s Crown Jewels

Among the honorees at the 2007 Departmental Awards ceremony were six Foreign Service National employees who were selected from an already elite pool of 81 nominees worldwide. These six, representing what Secretary Condoleezza Rice calls “the crown jewels of America’s diplomatic presence,” were named FSNs of the Year for their service in countries that experienced dramatic events or key bilateral negotiations during 2007.

Sawsan Al-Bassam of Iraq was selected as the FSN of the Year for her outstanding work in representing the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad while facing considerable personal hardship and danger.

An unaccompanied post in one of the most challenging diplomatic environments, the U.S. Consulate General in Juba took great strides in 2007 toward Secretary Rice’s Transformational Diplomacy goals: laying “new diplomatic foundations” and working in “partnership, not paternalism.” Since its opening in 2005 in the capital of Southern Sudan, colleagues at this post work to ensure the success of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and, hopefully, to help transform the region from a war-torn area to one of peace and economic prosperity.

Another U.S. Consulate, Recife in Northeast Brazil, covers a vast region with five Foreign Service officers and 30 Locally

Employed staff members. Long relegated to the shadows cast by Sao Paulo’s dynamic economy and Rio de Janeiro’s glamour, Brazil’s nine northeastern states are home to 50 million people and three major



metropolitan areas with more than 2 million people each. The area also boasts long and historic ties with the United States.

Telework continues to grow as an option for many Department employees, according to the Office of Employee Relations. A March survey showed that 89 percent of the 2,453 telework-eligible posi-

tions were filled. Proponents cite the usual telework benefits—reduced absences, less stress on employees and the environment, less office crowding, increased productivity and higher morale. The Department has two telework eligibility criteria: the position and the person in the position must both be eligible.

The Civil Service Mid-Level Rotational Program, which just completed its first year, offered Civil Service employees the chance to learn how another bureau’s work meshed with that of their home bureau and how the body of bureaus fit into the Department’s mission. The pilot program worked well enough for the Department to start another round of rotations for 2008, and some of its biggest fans were supervisors. One supervisor noted her office’s need for new people with new ideas to avoid “going stale.”

Last but not never least, a final salute to our colleagues en route to their final posting: *John Hugh Crimmins; Richard John Dols; Raymond Garo; John L. Proctor; and David A. Roberts.*

*Rob Wiley*

Rob Wiley  
Editor-in-Chief

## COMING IN MARCH

- >>> Stockholm Finds ‘One Big Thing’
- >>> Cultural Awareness in Malawi
- >>> Professional Development in France
- >>> Profiling HR’s Knowledge Center
- ... and much more!



Questions? Comments?  
statemagazine@state.gov



# LYING IN STATE: STATE DEPARTMENT MYTH BUSTING!

MYTH: STANDING TOO NEAR A SHREDDER FOR EXTENDED PERIODS WILL INDUCE MUSTACHE GROWTH IN WOMEN.

TRUTH: THIS ONLY HAPPENS IF THE DOCUMENTS BEING SHREDDERED ARE CLASSIFIED "WAY, WAY SECRET" (CARRYING THE OFFICIAL CAPTION "WOWZA!"). LESS COMMON SIDE EFFECTS INCLUDE TRANSFORMATION INTO A WEREWOLF.



MYTH: PRAIRIE DOGS FOUND AMBASSADOR SPALDING BLUESTONE AS A BABY AND RAISED HIM AS ONE OF THEIR OWN, WHICH IS WHY HE IS FLUENT IN THEIR LANGUAGE.

TRUTH: AMBASSADOR BLUESTONE WAS RAISED BY HUMAN PARENTS. IT WAS A PRAIRIE DOG BROTHER-IN-LAW WHO TAUGHT AMBASSADOR BLUESTONE TO SPEAK THE LANGUAGE, AN ABILITY THAT HAS MADE HIM THE DARLING OF THE GROUND SQUIRREL-AMERICAN COMMUNITY.



MYTH: CERTAIN AMBASSADORS ARE GIVEN PERSONAL JET PACKS SO THEY CAN FLY ABOUT AT WILL.

TRUTH: JET PACKS SHOULD ONLY BE USED FOR OFFICIAL TRAVEL.



MYTH: STATE ANNEX 144 CONTAINS AN ARENA WHERE GLADIATORIAL COMBAT DETERMINES WHO RECEIVES THE MOST CONTESTED OFFICE SUPPLIES.

TRUTH: THERE IS NO GLADIATORIAL ARENA IN ANNEX 144. IT IS LOCATED IN ANNEX 145.



MYTH: EVEN IF YOU FOLLOW A HARDSHIP POSTING IN OUTER ICKYSTAN WITH A HARDSHIP PLUS DANKER POSTING IN EQUATORIAL TOJAMISTAN, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT YOU WILL THEN GET YOUR DREAM POSTING IN RITZOVIA.

TRUTH: ACTUALLY, THIS IS TRUE.



AGUELES 2007



\* FEB. 2008

Japan Iraq Mali  
Russia Pakistan China  
Venezuela Cote d'Ivoire  
Sudan  
Cyprus **Benin**



U.S. Department of State  
Bureau of Human Resources  
Washington, DC 20520

Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use

PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE AND FEES  
**PAID**  
DEPARTMENT  
OF STATE  
ISSN 1099-4165

If address is incorrect, please indicate change. Do not cover or destroy this address label. POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to:

**State Magazine**  
**HR/ER/SMG**  
**SA-1, Room H-236**  
**Washington, DC 20522-0108**