

Global Link

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UPCOMING EVENTS

January 30, 6:30-8 p.m.
Unaccompanied Tour reception and resource fair with FLO and the Director General, Oakwood Falls Church.

February 5, 7 p.m.
Art, ARGO and History, Randolph Towers, Ballston.

February 19, 7-9 p.m.
Happy Hour for Foreign Service newcomers and AAFSW members, Oakwood Falls Church.

February 26, 10 a.m.
Lecture on the historic Blair House, State Department.

All events may be subject to change. Please check our website, www.aafsw.org, Facebook page or contact office@aafsw.org for updates.

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The Development of a SOSA Project

The Global Link will feature the personal stories of several of our SOSA Award winners over the next few months. The first is from Jan Cote-Cartwright, our NEA winner for her project in Tel Aviv, Israel.

It had been a very rough year, and I was looking for something to change my focus. After my fourth time reading “The Art of Happiness” by the Dalai Lama, where he emphasizes that the road to happiness lies in helping others, I knew I had found my answer.

At my post, Tel Aviv, as at most U.S. Missions, “Trafficking in Persons” (TIP), is part of the Political Section’s portfolio. They welcomed my offer to volunteer, and we set about determining where I could fit in. As the Information Management Officer at post, I already had a full-time job! Management approved my attendance of a few meetings to meet the local Non-Government Organizations and shelter directors. They needed someone who could a) increase awareness of trafficking within Israel, and b) find out how we could help at the grassroots level.

I was able to arrange meetings with several shelter directors in my off hours and to tour their facilities to see first-hand what was needed. There was one common thread—food, clothing, kitchenware, bedding, towels, and other simple items were all in short supply. Departing Embassy families typically donate excess belongings, but here in Israel, there are alarmingly few outlets for donation. Consequently, most



Jan and fellow volunteers paint a shelter for victims of sex trafficking in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Continued on page 2.

In Their Own Words, from page 1.

household items end up on the street for general trash collection! I have a huge garage, and started to advertise drop-off and pickup of donated household items and food. I made up business cards to advertise the collections and on the back provided web links for further information on trafficking in Israel. I set up collection boxes at the Mission, contacted the shelters weekly to find out their current needs, sorted the items and delivered them to the shelters.

The donation volume quickly became so great that I had to ask for volunteers to help me sort and deliver! The shelters were overwhelmed with the generosity of the huge amounts of items suddenly coming their way—and on a regular basis. Through the Mission newsletter and word of mouth, other diplomatic missions, the international school, and local Israelis also began donating items.

The British Ambassador's wife, who maintained a website for volunteerism in Israel, contacted me and we collaborated on ideas and contacts. I organized volunteers for several weekends to paint an entire floor at the shelter for the victims of prostitution, setting up a collection jar at the Embassy from which we were able to buy all the necessary painting supplies. One of the shelters happened to be in a port used by the U.S. Navy, and I put them in touch. Now Navy volunteers are also helping the shelter in Haifa! I also used funds from the collection jar to pay for the repair of donated bicycles and purchase specifically needed items from yard sales or shops. I frequented yard and mission community sales, handing out my business card and offering to pick up everything they couldn't sell at the end of the day—they were thrilled to get rid of it!

Two of the shelters produced handmade purses and woven baskets. I helped find them outlets to sell their items and also organized sales at the Embassy. During the sales, I took pictures on my iPhone to send to the shelters. The successful sale of their handmade items brought such joy to the residents—it raised their self esteem and confidence, while giving them badly needed extra money to buy personal items. I applied for a grant from the J. Kirby Simon Trust to buy six sewing machines for three shelters, and along with other volunteers taught the basics of sewing. Learning even the most basic sewing skills has brought such joy and empowerment to the ladies living in the shelters. It's a new world for them. It's a new world for me. The Dalai Lama was right: the road to happiness indeed lies in helping others.

It only takes one person to be the catalyst but it takes a willing community to make a difference. My advice to others: keep a book of contacts for everything. Maintain lists of those who have helped and send out thank you notes/emails with links for further information on the topic at hand or upcoming volunteer activities. As your name and project become known, it's amazing how the contacts and calls begin to multiply, from people offering to help to those that need help. Keep yourself restricted to the basic purpose of your project to avoid becoming spread too thin and paralyzingly overwhelmed. Simply providing contacts for those falling outside the lines of your particular project will keep this under control.

Trafficking in Persons is all over the news—there is a war going on. Raising awareness of its existence is an important part of that war. Human trafficking, torture, slavery, the exploitation of the weak exemplifies man's inhumanity to man since civilization began. Why then has modern civilization not been able to eliminate this ancient practice? It will never end as long as we continue to write it off as "someone else's problem." How often have you heard of the disappearance of women and children, or seen prostitutes working and children begging on the street? We have to ask ourselves how we can idly walk by them and not wonder who is exploiting them? Do we seriously think they're doing this willingly?

Gandhi taught "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." What about the way we allow humans to treat humans? Through all this year I have learned that although donating money and items is fabulous, the greatest treasure we can donate is our time.

*Jan Cote-Cartwright
Tel Aviv, Israel*



The Dorman Award is bestowed annually in honor of Lesley Dorman, past president of AAFSW and current AAFSW volunteer.

Debbi Miller is the 2012 recipient of the Dorman Award.

"From the President's Desk" will return next month.

Profile of Dorman Award Winner Debbi Miller



Debbi Miller joined AAFSW in 1977, and has been involved in the organization ever since. She is a regular and longtime volunteer at the AAFSW Art & BookFair. In addition, she has delighted us with her considerable musical talents on many occasions, including special Mother's Day concerts for the Foreign Born Spouses and a duo recital program in

the Diplomatic Reception Rooms. For the past several years, she has personally selected and performed songs to enhance the annual SOSA award ceremony.

Debbi was a key figure in AAFSW's 50th Anniversary celebration in 2008. She went through stacks of albums and loose photos, scanned nearly 200 of them, and assembled a digital slide show covering the highlights of AAFSW's 50 years of accomplishments. Debbi researched the photos carefully in order to label them properly, ensuring the preservation of our institutional memory.

She was also the mastermind behind the extremely successful 50th Anniversary Musical Play. Debbi directed the play, rigorously edited the script, recruited actors and singers, located and edited karaoke mp3 accompaniments to the parody songs, found a Foreign Service spouse graphic artist to make decade-themed signs, distributed scripts and music, organized rehearsals, oversaw the sets, costumes and props, and ran the sound system—all while narrating and singing in the performance! The tremendous response to this 50th Anniversary Play persuaded AAFSW to make a DVD, so she did it all again (with a few cast changes) using the sound studio at NFATC. She then spent many hours editing the raw video to achieve the best possible final product.

Debbi has served AAFSW as its Membership Chair since 2009, during which time our membership has increased by 55%. She greets each new member by email and sends them welcome gifts. She regularly represents AAFSW to the A-100 Spouse classes at NFATC, introducing “newbies” to our organization and inviting them to join us.

Debbi also manages AAFSW's Mentoring program. She recruits Foreign Service mentors (primarily through our Livelines email group), and pairs them with new spouses who request one-on-one help, based

on their age, location, profession, language skills, children, pets and other factors.

In addition to her volunteer activities, Debbi was the AAFSW Office Manager from 2003 to 2007, overseeing our first office move from DC to Arlington. She served with her husband, Ambassador Terry Miller, in Milano, Paris (UNESCO), Bridgetown, New York (USUN), Wellington, and several times in Washington, DC. Debbi brings a passion for excellence to everything she does.

The Dorman Award

Lesley Dorman was AAFSW president from 1976 to 1981. She has served AAFSW in many other capacities, including Membership Chair, Program Chair, Housing Chair and Public Relations Chair, and she continues to serve as an active Board member.

During her tenure as president, Lesley and a team of dedicated women formed the Forum Committee, which conducted a survey of Foreign Service spouses and their concerns. This resulted in the 1977 “Report on the Concerns of Foreign Service Spouses and Families,” a document which convinced State Department officials to support the creation of the Family Liaison Office (FLO). Lesley then worked closely with then-Under Secretary for Management Ben Reed and other senior officials to set up FLO, with the full support of then-Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. The Family Liaison Office opened in 1978, preceded by the Overseas Briefing Center (OBC) in 1977, also with Lesley's support and assistance.

As AAFSW president, Lesley testified successfully before the Foreign Affairs Committees of the House and Senate and the White House Committee on Families. Lesley was particularly concerned about the many divorced Foreign Service women who were left nearly penniless after supporting their husbands' careers for years. Her forceful testimony about this issue, coupled with the strong backing she received from Ambassador Loy Henderson and then-CIA Director William Colby, helped get congressional approval for survival annuities and pro rata benefits for divorced Foreign Service spouses.

In 1993 AAFSW decided to honor Lesley for her accomplishments and untiring efforts on behalf of the Foreign Service community by creating the Lesley Dorman Award in perpetuity. The award recognizes an AAFSW member who has performed outstanding service in all aspects of the organization.

AAFSW Annual Awards Ceremony Recap

On Tuesday, December 4, 2012, AAFSW celebrated our Annual Awards Ceremony. Despite a last-minute change in venue, the event was a success, recognizing winners of the Secretary of State Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad (SOSA), the Tragen Award and the Dorman Award. We were privileged to have Deputy Secretary of State William Burns present the awards.

This year, AAFSW received 34 nominations for the SOSA award. In a tough selection process, we picked six individuals, one from each geographic bureau. These winners, two officers and four family members, were all in attendance for the awards program, and included Karl Deringer (AF), Cassie Brenn (EAP), Elizabeth Shaffer, (EUR), Jan Cote-Cartwright (NEA), Chuck Wright (SCA) and Amy Zimmerman (WHA). Read more about their projects on our [website](#) and in the January issue of *Global Link*.

Following the presentation of the SOSA awards, Deputy Secretary Burns and Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired (DACOR) president Ambassador Paul Cleveland presented the Eleanor Dodson Tragen Award, funded by an annual gift from Irving Tragen and administered by DACOR. This award recognizes a member of the Foreign Service community who has effectively advocated for and enhanced the global rights and benefits of Foreign Service family members. This year's recipient, Tom Gallagher, a retired Foreign Service Officer, was recognized for his advocacy of rights and support for gay officers and for tandem couples.

The Lesley Dorman Award was presented by Lesley herself to Debbi Miller, a longtime member of AAFSW and current Membership Chair. Debbi has been active with AAFSW since 1977, as Office Manager from 2003-2007, as a longtime volunteer at the AAFSW Art & BookFair, and lending her musical talents to a number of AAFSW programs.

Following the presentation of awards, Debbi performed a selection of songs, giving special care to choose songs that best reflected the individual winners' volunteer efforts. A reception followed the inspiring musical program.

Be on the lookout in Global Link and on our website for contributions from some of the SOSA winners. They are happy to share their experiences and insight about volunteering overseas.

As the New Year gets underway, I look forward to working with SOSA and AAFSW again, and I can't wait to read the nominations submitted recognizing the work of our incredible community.

Lara L Center
AAFSW SOSA Award Coordinator
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Award presenters and recipients: Chuck Wright (SOSA), Tom Gallagher (Tragen), Jan Cote-Cartwright (SOSA), Elizabeth Shaffer (SOSA), Deputy Secretary of State William Burns, Cassie Brenn (SOSA), Amy Zimmerman (SOSA), Karl Deringer (SOSA), and Debbi Miller (Dorman).

Spousal Employment in the Foreign Service

“So, what do *you* do for a living?”

I am on my second tour and still respond to that question with a blank stare, especially when it is asked by someone outside of the Foreign Service. (I have a similar response when people ask me where “home” is.)

It’s not that I am not working—I am quite busy keeping up with two toddlers, running an expatriate household, and using some of my precious free time to write and volunteer. Of course, little to none of this is paid work so not everyone considers what I do to be “work.” But it is work, I promise!

Since we joined the Foreign Service, I have had countless conversations with spouses about the careers, jobs, and miscellaneous parts of our self-image that we all left behind when we agreed to this crazy and unpredictable lifestyle. It is a topic that comes up repeatedly, with both new acquaintances and long-time friends. As spouses, we all struggle to find our professional place in a life that is constantly changing and in which we have limited control over important factors such as where, and for how long, we live in any one place.

Not long ago, I had a formal career and a strong professional identity. In fact, I spent quite a bit of time earning degrees that now give me the right to the title of “Doctor” (don’t worry, I won’t make you call me that). Finishing my PhD was a dream come true. By the end of that long road, I was ready to establish myself in the working world. At the same time, my husband decided that his lawyering days needed to come to an end if he wanted to keep his sanity. And so, the topic of the Foreign Service came up for the first time.

We talked for hours about what life would/could be like in the Foreign Service, searching the Internet for blogs and other information. While John was overjoyed that he had found a career path that seemed perfectly suited for him and his interests, I was far more reluctant to agree to this life in which my career would be over before it started. So, I said “no, thank you.”

A few years later, after gaining valuable work experience in my field, and with a baby on the way, I was ready to try something new. I was also very ready to take a break from my academic life, especially writing those never-ending grant proposals to keep my position funded! Raising a family overseas seemed to be a great alternative. So, this time, I agreed to

follow my husband and his career around the world. We have since experienced the usual Foreign Service roller coaster ride as we navigated through moving to DC, orientation, Flag Day, language training, and our first post in Sao Paulo, Brazil. While I have been able to maintain some meaningful part-time consulting and volunteering work, I have also observed and greatly admired other spouses who have secured employment overseas, maintained their careers through telecommuting, or creatively reinvented themselves to allow them to work while living a nomadic life.

This year, the *Global Link* will feature a series of articles this year on the hot topic of spouse employment, with wisdom from spouses for spouses. Each article will focus on a different employment option, including: work in the mission, work in the local economy, telecommuting, working as a tandem couple, and running a business from home.

If you would like to discuss your experiences and challenges in seeking employment, please contact me at nicole@aafsw.org. Until next time...and don’t forget to start working on that resume!

Nicole Schaefer McDaniel
AAFSW Member
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Save the Date!

On **Tuesday, March 19, 2013**, AAFSW and the Woman’s National Democratic Center (WNDC) will present a joint panel discussion in recognition of Women’s History Month. The program will take place at the Department of State from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

Featured speakers will include Ambassador Maura Harty, Senior Policy Director and Director of the Koons Family Institute on International Law and Policy at the Alexandria, VA-based International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children; Tara D. Sonenshine, Under Secretary Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and former Executive Vice President of the United States Institute of Peace; and Rangita de Silva Alwis, Director of the Global Women’s Leadership Initiative at the Woodrow Wilson International Center.

More information will follow shortly in the March issue of *Global Link* and on our website, www.aafsw.org.

Tongue-Tied in Surabaya?

Language Training and the Foreign Service Spouse

One of the hardest aspects of being a trailing spouse in the Foreign Service is the challenge of learning multiple languages. As family members, we are eligible for language training at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and most of us should probably take advantage of this. But for many, undertaking full-time language training is a daunting prospect.

Our first post was the Dominican Republic. I had some Spanish from college and I also chose to go through FSI language training. It definitely helped. For a variety of reasons, I decided to drop out of the classroom setting after about four months. Even with that training, however, it was still difficult to ask for items in the supermarket, to ask the housekeeper to sweep the floor, or to ask the gardener to trim back the bamboo that was encroaching on our patio—extremely important in domestic life. There is little English spoken in the DR outside of the Embassy community.

Now we're heading to Surabaya, Indonesia, another post where almost no English is spoken. This time around, the biggest barrier to language training has been finding the time and motivation to study at home. As the "trailing spouse," I needed to keep up with all the domestic chores (cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping, bills/finances, and childcare) while also finding the time to put in 4-5 hours of homework and study time in order to acquire a new language. By the time I got home from a 6-hour day of intensive classes, I was exhausted (and so was my wife, the officer). But I still had to get dinner ready, entertain the kid so my wife could have some study time, do laundry, and pick up the toys strewn all over the house. As I write this, I'm waiting for the dryer to buzz. Once I'm done with the laundry, I'll probably squeeze in a quick workout, then start dinner while trying to distract the child away from Mama. Where do I fit in studying unless I stay up until 1 a.m.?

Indonesian is just so vastly *different* from English. In my Indonesian class, I was that guy, you know, the one who didn't study at all and made mistakes left and right on things that we had just been taught. I wanted to learn the language, honestly, but I also had other things to do. For my wife, it's different. It's her (paid) job to learn the language and failure is not an option for the Diplomat. She argues that I should be glad to get all this free language training. While I agree somewhat, it still doesn't do much for my motivation.

After three weeks of being beaten over the head with Indonesian, I decided to go the self-study route. I'm using a few texts purchased for my Kindle, the FSI distance-learning resources, and my wife's thousand-plus flashcards. As of this moment, I think I've maybe picked up ten words and looked at my textbooks once or twice. I will be at a severe disadvantage once we get to post, as few Surabayans speak English. This will isolate me and make navigating everyday life incredibly difficult. I'll also have to rely heavily on my wife to communicate for me, despite the fact that her position is travel-heavy. It's not an attractive prospect.

Whether it's lack of childcare (there is a year-long waitlist at the pricey FSI day care center), lack of time, or lack of motivation, many spouses struggle with the language learning process. For me, it's a combination of the latter two. On the other hand, I'm starting to understand how important language training is for all spouses.

Unfortunately the options for us EFMs aren't particularly flexible, especially if young children are in the equation. If other avenues were to be opened to us such as gearing a language course at FSI to the spouse and domestic matters, or a stipend to use as we see fit for private sessions that fit into our busy schedules or to attend classes at the numerous cultural centers and Embassies here in the DC area, language training could be a much less daunting endeavor. If the State Department is willing to invest tens of thousands of dollars into us attending classes at FSI, why not invest a fraction of that for us to learn the language outside of the rigid confines of FSI—in our own way and at our own pace?

Dave Pernal is a trailing spouse in the Foreign Service. He follows his wife around the globe along with his son and two dogs.

Dave is also an aspiring chef and entrepreneur. You can follow his antics at davepernal.com and theexpatchef.wordpress.com.



Classified Advertising

AAFSW now offers free classified advertisements to its members. The *Global Link* is sent by mail and electronically to our members and to Community Liaison Offices worldwide for a sizable total monthly readership.

Do you have a business or service that you would like to advertise to the Foreign Service community? Send a brief notice (100 words or less) to office@aafsw.org for approval with the subject line AD FOR GLOBAL LINK. If you have a business website, it can be hyperlinked in the electronic version of the newsletter, so please include your URL. Advertisements will run on a space-available basis for one month at a time and will rotate in order of receipt.

We also accept classified advertising for real estate rentals and sales, as well as sales of other items (cars etc.) on our website, www.aafsw.org. View or submit ads on the website. Not a member of AAFSW? Join now! Apply online at our website: <http://www.aafsw.org/aafsw/membership.htm>.

New Neighborhood Sponsor Database

Are you currently in the DC area? Are you willing to help others who are transitioning to Washington? If so, please add your name and contact information to the new "Neighborhood Sponsors" list in the Database section of Livelines!

Let's get a good list of people who are willing to answer questions by e-mail and/or phone, and to help newcomers who have just arrived. And, while you're in the Livelines Database area, don't forget to use the new "EFM Businesses" database as well!

New Language Training Option for Family Members

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) is now offering Mango Languages as an additional beginning-level online language resource for DOS Civil Service and Foreign Service employees, as well as Eligible Family Members (EFMs) and Members of Household (MOHs).

Available on an extended pilot basis, Mango Languages offers online resources in more than 40 languages and also has an accompanying mobile app. To create a Mango account, users must first sign up for the FSI Online Language Resource Library (SR041) on the FSI Learn Center via this intranet link: <http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg/default.asp?EventID=SR041>.

From the SR041 Learn Center page, there is a Mango link that users will click to create their Mango Languages account. Once users have created and activated their Mango account, they can access Mango Languages anywhere they have Internet access, by visiting: <https://libraries.mangolanguages.com/departmentstate/start>.

For questions about technical issues with the FSI Online Language Resource Library (SR041), contact FSI LearnCenter's help desk at LearnCenterHelp@state.gov.

Welcome To Our New And Returning Members

Kara B. Babrowski
Benjamin J. Baughman
Jeffrey M. Blander
Juan Manuel Cammarano
Lyric Winona Clark
Scott K. Clayton
Nicola Cloutier
Courtney Burns Cooper
Robert J. Dahlke
Yohanca Delgado
Pamela Farrand
Amy Flohr
Amanda Lynn Fong

Mark O. Gul
Meredith S. Hiemstra
Sarah E. Montague
Michelle M. Morales
David Pernal
Nicole Schaefer-McDaniel
Tim Stultz
Frankie Sturm
Erica N. Thibault
Sergiu Z. Troie
Sara M. Werth

AAFSW Announces New 2013 Merit Scholarship

Eligibility: High school seniors (or gap year students) entering college in Fall 2013, whose families are part of the foreign affairs agency community. An immediate family member must be a current member of AAFSW at the time of application.

Deadline: April 2, 2013.

Amount: \$2,000

Criteria: Academic work, outside activities, test scores and an essay.

Please visit www.aafsw.org or email office@aafsw.org for an application form.

Help Wanted

One or two people are needed to cashier in the AAFSW Used Bookstore on Wednesdays. Start as soon as possible— we will train! Duties may also include shelving and boxing books. The store is open noon to 2:30.

Contact Brian Neumann, Bookroom Manager, at 202-223-5796 for more information.

Mentors Wanted

AAFSW has a program of one-on-one spouse mentoring, created primarily for new A-100 spouses and first-tour spouses. We are trying to match mentoring volunteers from our AAFSW membership with mentoring requests from the "newbies" based on as many points in common as possible: ages of children, languages spoken, areas of professional interest, and the like.

We have already paired 50 new trailing spouses/partners with enthusiastic mentors and we are eagerly awaiting feedback from those involved. Of course, we need lots more volunteers, especially those whose spouses are still active duty, and are still likely to be serving overseas.

This program has the potential to do two wonderful and worthwhile things - help people who are new to the Foreign Service with their many life challenges, and create the next generation of AAFSW leaders.

If you know of anyone who might want or need mentoring, or if you are interested in becoming a mentor yourself, please send an email to mentor@aafsw.org. Thanks!

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