

AFSA'S 2006 OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARD WINNERS

These awards honor exemplary performance and extraordinary contributions.

Delavan Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

Malgorzata "Gosia" Lamot

Beyond her regular duties as the office management specialist for the deputy chief of mission, Malgorzata "Gosia" Lamot has made significant contributions to the entire embassy community in Kuwait. She generously shares her knowledge, skills and lifelong commitment to learning and exercise through spirited and relevant activities she organizes for embassy staff and family members. For enhancing the quality of life and learning at Embassy Kuwait, Lamot has been selected as the 2006 winner of the Delavan Award.

Nearly 10 percent of Embassy Kuwait's 500 personnel participate in the popular program she runs during her lunch break every day. "The Healthy Living Lunch Break" promotes both physical and mental fitness as well as financial and social well-being. Four times a week, she leads a group-oriented athletic activity, such as walking, running or water exercises, enjoyed by a loyal following of locally-engaged staff, Foreign Service officers and family members.

Wednesday's lunch breaks are dedicated to promoting professional development. Lamot targets each lecture to specific groups of employees or Eligible Family Members. Most of these workshops aim to better familiarize employees with the Department of State and the embassy. For example, her talk on employment opportunities for spouses weighed the benefits and disadvantages of outside employment versus embassy employment as an Eligible Family Member.

The sessions on "Intranet versus Internet"

and "FSI Distance Learning" were so popular that she had to repeat them several times to accommodate the extraordinary demand from FSN and direct-hire personnel.

During the 2006 winter school break, when options were scarce for organized activities for students, Lamot arranged a three-day Junior Diplomat Program for embassy youth between the ages of 12 and 15. In addition to field trips, the group met at the embassy and learned about the functions of the many elements of the U.S. mission to Kuwait and visited the ambassador's residence.

Lamot's creative programs have contributed enormously to post morale. Her programs have prepared participants to make better career decisions, improve their performance, gain new skills and compete more effectively for promotions and awards. She also has boosted participants' self-confidence, and encouraged them to share their knowledge and demonstrate their new skills to others.

Kuwait is her second posting as an OMS, the first being Riyadh. Before joining the Foreign Service, Lamot was an EFM and worked as an overseas educational adviser during postings with her husband to Abu Dhabi and Riyadh. She was born and educated in Poland and is a graduate of the Academy of Economics in Krakow. She and her consular officer husband, Charles Glatz, have three children.



Lamot (right) with the junior diplomats at the ambassador's residence in Kuwait.

M. Juanita Guess Award

FOR A COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER

Martine S. McKinnie

This year's M. Juanita Guess Award goes to Martine McKinnie for her superb performance as community liaison officer at Embassy Yaounde, which resulted in a dramatic improvement in morale among mission employees, their families and the American community.

"Martine's devotion to duty is without parallel," explains the deputy chief of mission. "She seems to be everywhere at all times, organizing or assisting in an astounding number of morale-boosting programs, both official and private.

Her outreach to the expatriate and Cameroonian communities has brought great credit to this mission."

She sees her highest priority as welcoming newcomers and assisting them in getting settled and getting their bearings in Yaounde, a historically-difficult-to-staff 25-percent differential post.

"As an experienced Foreign Service family member," she says, "I know first-hand

how stressful moving to a new environment can be on anyone. ... It makes a world of difference to have someone assist in the crucial first days after arrival and during an entire tour."

McKinnie begins welcoming new employees and family members long before they arrive at post. "Many new employees have told me they have never felt so welcome upon arrival in a new community," comments the deputy chief of mission. "I felt the same when I arrived."

Fluent in French and English, McKinnie has made a tremendous contribution to the post language program. The French-immersion trips she has organized have been particularly popular for helping staff and family members learn about and appreciate the culture of Cameroon.

A weekly newsletter that McKinnie puts together serves as a great resource, including information for diverse interests. She is inclusive, and ensures that all members have holiday plans. "Martine made me feel welcome at a time when I was new to living at an American embassy," says a Marine security guard. "She was so helpful, and that set the tone for the impression I got about the entire civilian community here in Yaounde."

A strong advocate for family member employment, McKinnie works to seek and support job opportunities inside and outside the mission. Ambassador Niels Marquardt describes McKinnie as "an indispensable actor both in building internal morale and in projecting an appropriately inclusive public image for this mission."

Martine McKinnie grew up in Niger. She went to Paris for three years of secretarial training, and returned to Niamey, where she gained valuable private-sector experience working for several companies before going to work for the U.S. embassy as an office management specialist. She has accompanied her Foreign Service spouse, Robert McKinnie, for 19 years to Georgetown (Guyana), Kinshasa, Bogotá, Berlin, Dar es Salaam and Washington. The couple has three sons. The family will return to Washington this summer for a new assignment.



McKinnie, with the Embassy Yaounde Marine Detachment, delivering food and supplies to an AIDS/HIV orphanage.

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MIKKELA THOMPSON

Newest additions to the AFSA Memorial Plaque are unveiled.

The Honorees

David E. Foy, a facilities manager at Consulate Karachi, was killed by a car bomb on March 2, 2006, as he was about to enter the consulate on his way to work. After a 21-year career in the Navy, Foy had joined the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations in 2003, and was on his second tour of duty.

Stephen E. Sullivan, Diplomatic Security Special Agent, was killed in a car bombing in Mosul, Iraq, on Sept. 19, 2005. He was serving as acting regional security officer for the Regional Embassy Office in Mosul, and was part of a chief-of-mission motorcade that was attacked.

Barbara C. Heald, a civilian employee of the Army's Project and Contracting Office, was killed on Jan. 29, 2005, while working at her desk, by a rocket that hit the U.S. embassy complex in Baghdad. She had volunteered for service in Iraq after retiring from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and was on her third tour there when she was killed.

Lieutenant Commander Keith E. Taylor, a Navy reservist, was killed in the Jan. 29, 2005, rocket attack on the embassy complex in Baghdad. He was the chief contracting officer for transportation and communications for the Army's Project and Contracting Office.

Amb. Holmes welcomed the family members of the honorees and other guests, numbering over 200. "To their families and friends gathered here," said Holmes, "I express my deepest gratitude for the contributions that your loved ones have made for our nation. But I also want to acknowledge the sacrifices that *you* have made, and the pain and loss that you have endured. Please be assured that we will never forget what they have done."

Following the presentation of the colors by a United States Armed Forces Color Guard, Sec. Rice spoke about each of the four honorees and read a message from President George Bush.



MIKKELA THOMPSON

AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes and Secretary Rice at the Plaque Ceremony.



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Retiree Coordinator Norma Reyes greets Foreign Affairs Day attendees at the AFSA table.

The message included the following: "Across our nation and around the world, members of the Foreign Service, Civil Service and Foreign Service Nationals work to improve lives, advance prosperity and protect our homeland. As they support our country, these individuals make great sacrifices and, of course, some have paid the ultimate price. ... We honor the Foreign Service members who lost their lives this

past year ... I appreciate the members of the American Foreign Service Association for their support of the men and women who face danger to protect our citizens."

In his remarks, Holmes said that the individuals being honored "voluntarily embarked on very difficult missions to serve their country in extremely dangerous places — Iraq and Pakistan. They did not consider themselves heroes. ... The men and women in the Foreign Service face great risks and serious hardships every day in virtually every post in which they serve. The same is true for our colleagues from other U.S. government agencies serving overseas. However, despite the danger, they contin-

ue to go forth with dedication and determination, united in their desire to serve their nation and to meet the demands of service in a turbulent and uncertain world."

Guests at the ceremony included Acting Director General of the Foreign Service John O'Keefe, USAID Administrator Randall Tobias, Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security Richard Griffin, FAS Administrator Michael Yost, Rep. James McGovern (D-Mass.), and representatives for Rep. G.K. Butterfield (R-S.C.), and for Sen. John Warner, (R-Va.), among many others.

After the official ceremony, Sec. Rice greeted the family members and offered personal condolences. The plaque ceremony was followed by Foreign Affairs Day seminars sponsored by the State Department. After the conclusion of the day's programs, AFSA hosted a reception and announced the annual AFSA Merit Scholarship winners. □