Dear AFSA members,

During 2012, AFSA addressed broad concerns and conducted wide-ranging activities to raise the profile of diplomacy, the Foreign Service and AFSA itself.

Key Priorities and Concerns

The transition from Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to Secretary of State John Kerry provided an opportunity to share our key priorities and areas of concerns: security/diplomacy and effective risk management that does not overly constrain the ability to engage in the field; strengthening Foreign Service capacity through an increase in substantial education and training opportunities for the profession of diplomacy; tangible recognition and fair compensation for diplomats; and institutional reform and restructuring to strengthen the Foreign Service, the Department of State and USAID.

The issues relevant to risks and dangers inherent in the conduct of diplomacy were brought under sharper focus by the tragic events of Sept. 11 in Benghazi. Other themes summarized in the AFSA letter to Secretary-Designate Kerry were prompted by the growing realization of the need to strengthen the Foreign Service and the State Department as professional institutions. The global environment and its challenges have increased professional demands on the Foreign Service—as well as on diplomacy and development—to make the right choices on goals, priorities and strategies.

Professionalism in Decline

At the same time, there is evidence that meritocracy and professionalism as concepts governing our diplomatic and development institutions are in decline. Political patronage and partisanship have grown steadily in the last four decades. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the senior leadership and management ranks of our agencies, where, despite steady expansion, the role of the career Foreign Service has diminished and questions are raised about its capacity to grow the senior leadership bench that is needed to craft and implement effective American diplomacy—political, commercial, developmental and humanitarian.

Strengthening and Modernizing AFSA

Against this backdrop, our 2012 Annual Report reflects AFSA’s continuing focus on: (1) building capacity for more effective advocacy with management and Congress by getting the right staff in place, the data we need for serious and credible analysis, and broader and deeper relationships with key decision-makers; (2) renewing our commitment to professional excellence and advocating for a rethink of requirements for today’s diplomats and what professional education and training is needed, when and how and from whom; (3) improving communications with members and developing more substantial and sustained dialogue between AFSA leadership and our members in the field; (4) reaching out to policymakers and the media for improved and effective advocacy; and (5) clarifying governance and professionalizing and streamlining internal AFSA operations to better define the role and responsibility of the Governing Board.
and its individual members, the executive director and the professional staff, to better align programs and resources with strategic priorities.

The annual report that follows provides highlights from all sections of AFSA summarizing key accomplishments and ongoing programs that move us toward our five strategic goals: strengthening governance and internal operations, core advocacy, image and outreach, growing membership and development and supporting professionalism and ethics in the Foreign Service.

As a professional association and union, AFSA’s mission is to promote a strong professional career Foreign Service as the institutional backbone of American diplomacy, protect the professional interests and rights of our members, promote high professional standards for all American diplomats, and promote broader understanding of the critical role of diplomacy and development in promoting America’s national security, economic prosperity and values. This is, however, a continuing endeavor that calls for perspective, experience, insight, fresh ideas, courage and patient persistence to achieve success.

2012 Highlights

- We draw satisfaction that our membership continued to grow, although at a slower rate reflecting the slowdown in hiring.
- The budget grew modestly to $4.66 million with revenue principally from dues.
- Our advocacy on Capitol Hill continues to intensify as we strengthen relationships and build new ones with the 113th Congress.
- We have approved a new study of congressional attitudes toward the Foreign Service to update the one done a decade ago.
- AFSA programming continued to draw sustained participation and contributed to raising the profile of the Foreign Service and AFSA.
- Successful member mobilization on behalf of Foreign Service animal companions and their owners against United Airline’s pet transportation and fee policies.
- The AFSA High School Essay Contest is now recognized as one of the leading contests of its kind, with a generous cash award, meeting with the Secretary of State and a Semester at Sea educational voyage for the winner.
- The first redesign of The Foreign Service Journal in 18 years was a resounding success, drawing kudos from members and non-members alike.
- The FS book program is growing, supplementing the highly successful Inside a U.S. Embassy with a new book project on the history of AFSA and, implicitly, of the Foreign Service itself.
- AFSA’s labor management team remains stretched thin with an ever-growing caseload of both grievances and requests for advice and assistance in resolving a wide array of problems, reflecting, at least in part, a diminished capacity of management to deal with employee issues and the influx of new employees at State and USAID, in particular.
- We established a new standing committee on professionalism and ethics.
- The Governing Board governance committee developed written descriptions of the role of the GB and individual board positions, and initiated discussion on how to optimize relationships between and among board members, the executive director and professional staff.
- For the first time ever, AFSA has retained the services of management consultants to undertake a staffing review to better align staff and organization with mission and goals, and of development experts to advise us on expanding our professional fundraising and communications objectives.
- We initiated an ongoing campaign to promote Foreign Service support for and engagement with the new United States Diplomacy Center and Museum of American Diplomacy project, officially launched by Secretary Clinton at the end of her tenure.

In the efforts described above, we have drawn on the views and concerns of our elected board representatives and officers and on those conveyed to us by members. We look forward to hearing more from you throughout 2013. Sincerely, Susan R. Johnson

In honor of U.S. diplomatic personnel lost in Libya and all who serve in the U.S. Foreign Service.
AFSA Board of Governors


The Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board

Front row, left to right: Richard McKee, Judith Baroody, James P. Seavers, Stephen W. Buck, Jed Meline.

AFSA Executive Staff

Executive Director Ian Houston

Executive Assistant to the President Patrick Bradley

USAID Staff Assistant Chioma Diké
Another busy year began with the annual battle in Congress over budget and salary issues (including Overseas Comparability Pay) and ended with a report on the Sept. 11 attack in Benghazi which resulted in the tragic loss of four colleagues and friends. AFSA weighed in on changes in staffing of posts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan; training and benefits offered to those serving in those posts; and the extended departure of family members from some other posts in the region.

**Personnel Issues**

We consulted on the implementation of new limited non-career appointment programs in the bureaus of Diplomatic Security and Consular Affairs, and a new program creating limited short-term overseas developmental opportunities for Civil Service employees. And we urged a review of Foreign Service recruitment practices, re-evaluation of Career Development Plans and monitored the redistribution of positions reserved for entry-level Foreign Service members.

Throughout the year, we defended the Service against attacks on our individual rights to privacy, such as the Stop Trading on Congress rights to privacy, such as the attacks on our individual defended the Service against members. Entry-level Foreign Service protection of positions reserved for monitored the redistribution of an alternative dispute resolution program.

For years, State used a few limited non-career appointments to fill very-short-term needs. Such programs expanded in 2011 and, even more dramatically, last year. As U.S. troops left Iraq, State informed us of a plan to hire LNA personnel security specialists with skills different from those of other DS employees. Soon after, State proposed to hire LNA visa adjudicators for Brazil, Russia, India and China, since filling these jobs with career candidates was impractical.

We discussed a range of questions: the role of these employees at posts; the impact on training entry-level officers and the hiring of Eligible Family Members; whether AFSA would represent them; and the mechanics of ending their appointments. We helped develop standard criteria for LNA hiring, evaluation, retention and termination, including an “LNA handbook” and a modified Employee Evaluation Report form, and ensured AFSA participation in their entry-on-duty training.

Thanks to our advocacy, EFM hiring will not be reduced and LNAs will not compete with entry-level officers for developmental positions. In addition, no LNA program will bypass the exam as an entry method into the Foreign Service, and all LNAs will be represented by AFSA.

**High-Stress Posts**

Assignments to high-stress and unaccompanied posts carry many risks, many of which can be mitigated by better training. Extending training to Eligible Family Members can also help address the psychological stresses on both the employee and the loved ones left behind. Discussions with the Foreign Service Institute, the Office of Medical Services and the Family Liaison Office influenced a number of improvements in this regard.

As the military moved out of Iraq, we discussed with MED and others the steps that would be taken to protect the health and safety of FS members, including expansion of a Psychiatric Social Worker staff (another LNA category).

On an individual level, we have assisted several AFSA members who have returned from high-stress posts with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or other stress-related problems.

**FS Pets**

In April, United Airlines adopted a worldwide pet-shipping policy, ending the shipment of pets as accompanied baggage and requiring that they be shipped as cargo. This led to a drastic increase in both price and inconvenience to FS members. United waived the policy for the military. Through AFSA’s efforts, more than 3,000 first-person e-mails were sent to United. Concurrently, we worked with State to catalyze Foreign Affairs Manual changes countering United’s near monopoly on certain routes.

The result: a waiver similar to what was offered to the military was instated for the Foreign Service. The waiver itself is far from perfect, however, and its implementation by United’s staff has been uneven. More broadly, AFSA has been working with State to develop emergency evacuation standard operating procedures for pets.

**QDDR**

As part of the Quadrennial Developmental Review (QDDR)
Defense and Development Review, State initiated a program to provide overseas opportunities for Civil Service employees to develop knowledge that would improve their understanding of our realities when they returned to positions in Washington. This high QDDR priority, still in its pilot phase, has obvious potential benefits for State’s mission. AFSA negotiated clear definitions of purpose and scope (limiting the number of encumbered positions to 20 at any time), and a reciprocal element that would enable Foreign Service members to fill selected Civil Service positions for state-side assignments.

Following Rules
One of AFSA’s most important functions is to ensure that the department follows its own rules with regard to due process in disciplinary and security clearance cases. AFSA won a significant victory for an FS author and blogger whose work was distasteful to many, but who had complied with regulations in clearing his book and argued that regulations on blogging were unclear. The case led to a comprehensive review of relevant Foreign Affairs Manual regulations, and provided AFSA with the opportunity to use the process to clarify the rights of FS bloggers, writers and users of social media. This is an ongoing effort.

Less visibly, we weighed in on the case of an FS member accused of inappropriate conduct under disputed circumstances while traveling. The Department of Justice had sought to extend U.S. jurisdiction to this case by improperly applying a law that should apply only to active-duty military personnel. Concerned about the precedential implications of expanding a military law to Foreign Service civilians, AFSA supported the efforts of the private attorney involved, and DOJ backed off.

STOCK Act
The STOCK Act imposed a requirement that personal information be published online, threatening both the personal security of FS employees and the national security of the United States. Working with the Senior Executive Association and other affected groups, we have, thus far, achieved delays in implementation while these issues can be addressed.

In addition, members brought to our attention a number of forms and other efforts to collect information, which did not comply with rules intended to protect privacy and reduce the risk of information breaches. We were successful in getting a number of improper forms recalled, changed or more properly issued, and worked with the bureaus involved to increase awareness of the issues.

Taping Interviews
When a DS office in Washington sought to introduce audio- and videotaping of interviews during its investigations, AFSA questioned the initiative, and asked whether interviews that occurred overseas or contained classified information would be taped as well. We asked that DS furnish employees with a copy of the tape immediately after the interview.

DS stated that, at present, it did not plan to record interviews conducted overseas or containing classified information. It agreed to initiate the use of a standardized form to obtain informed consent before audio and video recording of any interview takes place, but stated that the employee would not be able to obtain a copy of the recordings until the investigation is completed, and the entire report of investigation is forwarded to the employee. AFSA continues to have concerns about this practice and has updated its guidance to employees under investigation to address it.

Security Clearances
On the security clearance front, we engaged in constructive discussions which appear to have influenced a number of promising trends. Significantly, while we sometimes disagreed with DS over other aspects of cases, in we did not see any new suspension or revocation cases initiated that did not have an understandable nexus to the government-wide standards.

In 2012, HR and DS initiated a more regular and fuller exchange of information regarding the status of individual cases, which we hope will reduce processing times. Our suggestions for stronger quality control are being considered, and we are hopeful the department will implement at least those measures used by other agencies with large security clearance workloads.

Benghazi
AFSA attorneys advised and represented employees before the Benghazi Accountability Review Board. We are monitoring implementation of the board’s recommendations.
USAID VP: Helping Even More Members
BY USAID VP FRANCISCO ZAMORA

The recently completed Development Leadership Initiative brought in more than 800 new Foreign Service officers, most of whom joined AFSA. As a result, our office has seen a significant increase in the pace and volume of requests for services and assistance, both here and in the field. While a great amount of our time is spent on negotiating policy, program and organizational issues, we also became closely involved in personal, one-on-one assistance to our new and old members. A sampling of our successes in 2012 follows:

• At our behest, USAID overturned an African post’s unfair demand that FSOs accept personal liability for auto accidents occurring during in-country car trips lasting more than 10 hours.
• We helped a member receive Virtual Separate Maintenance Allowance, which had been unfairly denied.
• Through our intervention with USAID’s Office of Human Resources, a member was allowed to ship all of his personal effects, including his car, back to his home of record when he had to leave post on compassionate travel.
• In monitoring the evaluation and promotion process, we discovered that the line drawing exercise could include several more promotions due to special circumstances.
• Some financial institutions, mortgage lenders, tax authorities and state and local governments are interpreting post mailing addresses as evidence that the employee is not a resident of the U.S. Several employees have experienced this situation, which required us to provide certification of their residency status to resolve the problem.
• In one case, we overturned the agency’s previous denial of eligibility for a recruitment incentive payment worth several thousand dollars; helped another member to find a missing federal student loan check; and established that another member’s service computation date of employment was incorrect.

The AFSA member meetings in April, May, June, July and October set the agenda for much of the last year, with frustration over the current promotion system a constant theme. FAS has been shrinking the Senior Foreign Service and FS-01 ranks in recent years and using upward stretches to fill numerous positions overseas, fueling this discontent. There was improvement in 2012 as more officers were promoted than in previous years, but we still have a long way to go to ensure that staffing decisions are based on a long-term assessment of personnel needs, rather than short-term fiscal concerns.

FAS will continue to be under budget pressure, so we have an obligation to make the agency run better, which includes treating its employees to the highest standards possible. In 2012, we clarified gray areas in the rules on time-in-class and time-in-service extensions for service in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, and agreed to open the Foreign Service recruitment process to a wider range of applicants to ensure that the agency can continue to bring in the highest-quality officers possible.

Late in the year, the Promotions Precepts Working Group started a review of the AFSA contract provisions covering career advancement, so we expect to make progress on this and other facets of the process during 2013.

The FAS Foreign Service faces issues that affect all FS employees. Despite the bad reputation of the much-maligned Partnership Councils of the 1990s, the latest incarnation—now labeled the Labor Management Forum—is actively pressing for a better work environment. FAS was ranked just 282nd out of 292 agencies in the 2012 ranking of “Best Places to Work in the Federal Government,” leaving room to improve.

I am particularly concerned that more than half the employees surveyed felt that the leadership did not generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the work force. I am pushing for significant improvement in 2013.
The past year saw several major accomplishments, with significant bottom line and positive career effects for the Foreign Commercial Service. We could not have accomplished anything like this without a strong, positive relationship with management. Our thanks go to Deputy Director General Charles (Chuck) Ford, Ejike Obineche, director of Foreign Service personnel, and Tom Moore, deputy assistant secretary for the Office of International Operations. I am also in great debt for the hard, smart work of Steve Morrison, AFSA FCS representative.

**Worked on the Proposed International Trade Administration Consolidation.** This subject dominated the last six months of the year and included extensive meetings with management, regular liaison on the Hill, outreach to the membership, analysis and a lot of jabber. We were disappointed that management could not find the capacity to respond in a spirit that could have produced a good product. We believe the proposal seriously threatens our clients’ interests and FCS members’ careers. The outcome is still in doubt as I write this column, but we have succeeded in getting substantial review and additional time.

**Established a Full-Time AFSA VP Position.** In 2012, after many years of advocacy, we changed the AFSA VP position from half-time, reporting to the Office of International Operations deputy assistant secretary, to a full-time position. This created greater independence, removed conflicts of interests and provided the time to do the job well. The officer is no longer reviewed for promotion or for awards, but receives time-in-class and time-in-service extensions for up to three years.

**Restored Bonuses.** Late in 2011, management declared there would be no money for bonuses for Commercial Service employees. We worked hard, enlisting allies on Capitol Hill, to have those funds restored, staving off a dangerous precedent with significant personal implications for anyone serious about our career.

**Beating Back the STOCK Act.** We worked, so far successfully—in dramatic last-minute pitches on the Hill with the larger Senior Government Service coalition—to postpone, and, we hope, overturn the provision of the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act that would have required Senior Service members to post their private financial information on the Internet for all to see. We successfully argued against it on the Hill and brought an American Civil Liberties Union suit arguing that the act is an invasion of privacy and endangers personnel and U.S. government security unnecessarily.

**Established an Ambassadorial Process.** We have made it a priority to have at least one ambassador appointed from the FCS ranks, and were finally successful this year in getting management to establish a process to implement this goal. We believe that an FCS ambassadorship is important not only for the career track, but also for the visibility and interagency prestige of the Service. It is long past the time for this neglect to be corrected.

**Established the Deputy Director General Position.** In the past, the DDG position has frequently (but not always) been held by an FSO. Working hard with Chuck Ford, we set the precedent that the DDG should always be reserved for an FSO. This is important not only for career mobility, but for the institution.
Throughout 2012, AFSA’s Labor Management staff dealt with a wide array of employment-related issues. By the close of the year, we were working on approximately 280 active individual cases: grievances, discipline proceedings and security clearance issues; Diplomatic Security, Office of the Inspector General and Office of Civil Rights investigations; and Benghazi Accountability Review Board inquiries.

Counseling Members
In addition, the LM staff counseled thousands of members on issues relating to, among other things, performance appraisals, promotions, time-in-class/time-in-service, tenure, assignments (including 5/8 waivers, DS assignment restrictions and involuntary curtailments); Office of Medical Services issues (clearances, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, disabilities, demands for repayment of medical bills); and allowances, per diem, entry-level salaries, overtime pay, workers compensation, debts, leave forfeiture, retirement, transportation/storages, and cohabitation and contact reporting.

Institutional Issues
The staff also worked on institutional issues relating to Foreign Commercial Service consolidation; Foreign Agricultural Service promotion numbers; concerns with Diplomatic Security’s Office of Special Investigations, including issues relating to audio/video recording of interviews; Senior Foreign Service salary conversion; Separate Maintenance Allowance for foreign-born, same-sex partners; the availability of the job search program for retirees at 65 years of age with less than 20 years of service; the department’s policy of hiring employees at age 58; legal protections for employees who have been on military leave; denial of medical treatment at post to children of separated parents; educational allowance for children of employees on reimbursable details at AFRICOM; waiver forms for employees assigned to High-Threat Tactical training; concerns relating to DS Ready Teams whereby agents are on-call for 30 days and can be deployed within 24 hours notice to any post; and issues relating to a new MED credentialing form, to name a few.

Off-Duty Conduct
In 2012 the State Department proposed disciplinary action—ranging from a five-day suspension to separation for cause—against a number of employees for off-duty conduct that, in some cases, it had not sought to regulate in the past (extramarital affairs between consenting women without any aggravating factors, such as dishonesty, intoxication, payment, exploitation, chain-of-command issues, coworker relations, criterion country nationals, or the prominence of grievant’s position.)

The board found, however, that because grievant was married and did not explicitly disclose his infidelity to his spouse, he created at least the possibility of blackmail. The board mitigated a three-day suspension to a letter of

Continued on page 67
As part of AFSA’s efforts to advance its mission during 2012, the legislative affairs department evolved into a multifaceted entity that sought the best practices possible to achieve our legislative goals during the 112th Congress.

Javier Cuevas, AFSA’s new director of advocacy, comes from the private sector, where he regularly managed national issue-driven campaigns on behalf of corporations and nonprofit groups. Together with Clint Lohse, AFSA’s legislative assistant and a former Senate staffer, he monitors and forecasts congressional actions.

**AFSA on Capitol Hill**

Drawing on AFSA’s formidable reputation as an expert on diplomacy, the advocacy department dedicated much of 2012 to developing a constituency/issue-driven strategic outreach and mobilization plan that clearly shows key stakeholders how the Foreign Service consistently contributes to the greater good.

**Stock Act**

AFSA reaffirmed its leadership role as the “Voice of the Foreign Service” by developing strategic partnerships with sister organizations to address issues like the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act. We are proud to report that the coalition was successful in getting Congress to postpone implementation of the STOCK Act’s Internet posting provisions—which could have potentially jeopardized the privacy and security of many career federal employees and their families. AFSA will continue to work for the elimination of such a provision.

AFSA also provided valuable testimony during congressional hearings and helped educate congressional offices about budget priorities and personnel security, among other important issues.

AFSA sent letters to key committees dealing with the Sept. 11 attack in Benghazi and briefed staffers about the need to get the risk/diplomacy balance right. AFSA commended the Accountability Review Board report on Benghazi and continues to promote the implementation of its recommendations.

AFSA organized and hosted a luncheon honoring retiring Richard Lugar, R-Ind., a longtime ranking member and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

**Your Support**

Thanks to your support, once again, the association’s political action committee, AFSA-PAC, played an essential role in advancing our legislative agenda. Retired Ambassador Thomas Boyatt, President Susan Johnson, Executive Director Ian Houston and other members of the PAC board made sure that AFSA’s top priorities were presented to congressional leaders during special functions and events.

Advocacy: Renewed Efforts on Many Fronts

**BY JAVIER S. CUEVAS, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY, AND CLINT LOHSE, LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT**
Communications, Marketing and Outreach

BY ÁSGEIR SIGFÚSSON, MARKETING AND OUTREACH DIRECTOR; TOM SWITZER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS; DONNA AYERST, AFSA NEWS EDITOR; AND PERRI GREEN, COORDINATOR, SPECIAL AWARDS AND OUTREACH

AFSA Events

AFSA continued to offer a wide variety of speakers, panel discussions and other events, covering both professional issues and bread-and-butter topics. There were 18 major events throughout the year, attracting close to 2,000 attendees—mostly AFSA members—as well as students, journalists, think-tank members, academics and the public at large.

Our Book Notes series featured three selections this past year: China Hand by John Paton Davies Jr.; The Dissent Papers by Hannah Gurman; and America’s Other Army by Nicholas Kralev. This series is designed to bring attention to books of interest to the Foreign Service community.

We started a new series in 2012, focusing on federal benefits. The first two events focused on Medicare and federal health benefits; the third event took place last month and featured a discussion on the Thrift Savings Plan program.

Our ongoing series of topical panel discussions featured programs focusing on the European Union and the euro, the experiences of third-culture children, the first anniversary of the Arab Spring and the 25th anniversary of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

We were pleased to offer conversations with two major Washington players: Deputy Secretary of State Thomas Nides and Representative Chris Van Hollen, D-Md. (left). Their perspectives on foreign affairs, the budget and the Foreign Service were much appreciated.

Our annual events—the memorial plaque ceremony on Foreign Affairs Day, the AFSA awards ceremony and the Adair Lecture at American University featuring Ambassador Chas. Freeman—all had excellent attendance.

We are particularly proud of two special events: the October celebration of the relaunch of The Foreign Service Journal, and our special screening of the film “Argo” in December.

AFSA will continue to offer events of interest and significance to our members and the Foreign Service community at large. We hope to be able to offer more programs looking at important events in the history of the Foreign Service, as well as informational programs on basic issues of importance to our
members—benefits, conditions of work and so on.

Recordings of all AFSA events are available on our Web site at www.afsa.org/AFSAvideos.aspx.
2012 AFSA ANNUAL REPORT

AFSA News

Riding on the coattails of The Foreign Service Journal’s redesign provided AFSA News with an entirely new look and feel. With the new design came a number of new features for the newsletter: a calendar of events on the cover page; “Life in the Foreign Service,” original cartoons reflecting the Foreign Service lifestyle; a new column, “Active After Active-Duty,” highlighting how busy our retirees are and the interesting things they are doing; and a greater effort to provide timely event coverage and information.

Last year saw a continuation of increased coverage of AFSA’s constructive dissent awards: the awards ceremony, profiles of the winners and a series of articles on dissent appear throughout the year. Our dissent awards, unique within the government, provide FS members the opportunity to effect change.

AFSA’s VP representatives did a thorough job of highlighting many of the difficulties, joys, frustrations and issues the five foreign affairs agencies and their employees face. The columns give our VPs the platform to express their concerns on everything from agency consolidation, the effects of budget constraints, security issues or family member matters, among many other pressing topics.

AFSA News encourages FS employees and their family members to submit articles. Please contact Donna Ayerst at ayerst@afsa.org.

AFSA on the Web

AFSA’s Web site and social media outlets continued to grow in 2012, with all of our online outreach tools seeing the most traffic ever.

WWW.AFSA.ORG TRAFFIC IN 2012

- In 2012, we had 260,867 visits to our Web site—up from 198,738 in 2011—representing an increase of 62,129 or 31.3 percent.
- Our Web site saw 186,347 unique visitors in 2012, compared to 139,204 in 2011—an increase of 47,143 or 33.9 percent.
- Statistics for pageviews tell an even more impressive story: we had 1,166,258 pageviews in 2012 and 685,872 in 2011. That’s an increase of 480,386 or 70 percent, an astounding number.
TOP FIVE MOST POPULAR PAGES IN 2012

SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH IN 2012

- Facebook went from 2,789 to 3,733 likes, an increase of 944 or 33.8 percent.
- Twitter went from 222 to 395 followers, an increase of 173 or 77.9 percent.
- YouTube went from 2,149 to 4,950 views, an increase of 2,801 or 130 percent.
Road Scholar
AFSA’s Road Scholar program entered its 17th year of operation in 2012, welcoming more than 600 participants to programs in Washington, D.C., Chautauqua, N.Y. and St. Petersburg, Fla. These programs remain one of AFSA’s most popular national outreach efforts, and their message about the importance of the Foreign Service continues to impress audiences.

In 2012, we offered 10 programs on a wide variety of subjects. The most popular topics continue to be those touching on the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. This year, we had participants from 30 states, as well as the District of Columbia and New Brunswick, Canada. For more information on AFSA’s Road Scholar programs, please visit www.afsa.org/roadscholar.

Speakers Program
One of AFSA’s most effective outreach platforms is our national Speakers Program. In 2012, AFSA deployed more than 450 Foreign Service speakers who lectured on the critical role U.S. diplomacy plays in promoting American interests to an estimated 28,000 professionals and academics in 42 states and Washington, D.C.

AFSA’s speaker corps comprises some 510 retired and active duty Foreign Service officers, including some 100 former ambassadors. Many of our retired speakers remain involved in foreign affairs as authors, consultants and teachers. Audiences range from universities and world affairs councils to civic organizations and high schools.

Retired Ambassador Chas. Freeman, a China and Middle East expert, spoke to more than 500 faculty members and students at American University’s annual Caroline and Charles Adair Memorial Lecture on Aug. 28. He addressed the challenges for U.S. diplomacy in a competitive world order. Speakers have addressed many other foreign relations topics while stressing the vital role the Foreign Service plays in advancing America’s economic, security and development interests around the globe.

Media
AFSA’s media outreach efforts remained intensive in 2012, as well. We placed—either directly or through AFSA retirees countrywide—52 interviews, articles, letters to the editor, op-eds and fact sheets advocating increased public and congressional support for U.S. diplomacy and development in leading media outlets including the Washington Post, New York Times, Congressional Quarterly, CNN, NPR and the Associated Press, among others.

A particular highlight of 2012 was AFSA President Susan Johnson’s 20-minute interview with NPR’s “Metro Connection” program following the September Benghazi attack. Drawing on the lessons gained during her own career, Johnson explained the extent of the risks U.S. diplomats must face while assigned abroad, given the rapid deterioration of security in many countries. She went on to discuss the rewards of public service. The program reached a national audience of more than eight million listeners.

AFSA arranged media for AFSA’s Memorial Plaque Ceremony, held at the State Department on Foreign Affairs Day, May 4. The ceremony was covered by 14 media outlets, including several TV networks.

AFSA’s Speakers Program has enabled the association to develop strategic partnerships with leading universities, including Michigan State University and the University of St. Thomas in Houston. AFSA benefits from their generous support through multiyear endowments, which provide funds for programs featuring prominent former U.S. ambassadors.

The program encourages speakers to remind their audiences to contact their congressional representatives to request increased funding for diplomatic readiness and development and to spotlight AFSA’s book, Inside a U.S. Embassy, an in-depth resource on how an embassy works.
AFSA’s 14th annual high school essay contest culminated in July with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton’s presentation of the first-place prize to Natasha Madorsky of Cleveland, Ohio. For the 2012 contest, AFSA welcomed two generous sponsorships. Leading strategy and technology consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton served as the official underwriter of the contest, making possible a $2,500 prize and an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. for Natasha and her parents, Dr. Elizabeth Stern and Mr. Michael Madorsky. Her teacher and mentor, Margaret ‘Peggy’ Hull, accompanied them to Washington.

Also new last year, the Institute for Shipboard Education’s Semester at Sea program (www.semesteratsea.org) is providing Natasha with an all-expense-paid educational voyage aboard the shipboard campus, the M.V. Explorer. The University of Virginia sponsors the unique academic program, which provides students with a college semester while traveling the world for 100 days or more.

Honorable mention certificates were awarded to 24 finalists for their excellent essays. Essays went through three rounds of judging by a panel comprised of active and retired Foreign Service officers, teachers and private sector volunteers.

This year the quality of the nearly 500 submissions was far superior to what we have received over the past 13 years of the contest. We feel that this can be attributed to the incentive of the Semester at Sea voyage (worth close to $30,000), the opportunity for the winner and his or her parents to come to Washington, D.C., and meet the Secretary of State, and the generous cash prize.
AFSA Awards

LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN DIPLOMACY
This year’s annual awards ceremony took place on June 26 in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the Department of State. Ambassador William Lacy Swing received AFSA’s Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award for his half-century of diplomatic service. Amb. Swing expressed his gratitude for a career that allowed him the opportunity to be present as history unfolded.

CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT AWARD
The 2012 winner of the William R. Rivkin Award for Constructive Dissent by a mid-level officer was Joshua Polacheck, who sent a cable challenging the thinking behind heightened security levels at embassies and the impact on getting the job done. No constructive dissent awards were given in the other three categories.

PERFORMANCE AWARDS
Leila Gupta received the Avis Bohlen Award for a Foreign Service Family Member; Sara Hurst Butler received the M. Juanita Guess Award for a Community Liaison Officer; and the Delavan Award for a Foreign Service Office Management Specialist went to James Velez. Jeff Jacob was named AFSA Post Representative of the Year.

SINCLAIRE LANGUAGE AWARDS
AFSA also presents other awards throughout the year. The Sinclaire Language Awards honor Foreign Service officers for their outstanding accomplishment in the study of a difficult language and its associated culture. The program was established by AFSA through a bequest from Matilda W. Sinclaire, a former Foreign Service officer. The winners were: Nancy Abella (Dari), Eric Collings (Uzbek), Sarah Grow (Persian/Farsi), James Hallock (Mandarin), Rebecca Hunter (Albanian), Theresa Mangione (Vietnamese), E. Jerome Ryan, Jr. (Japanese) and David Vincent Salvo (Serbian/Croatian).

GEORGE KENNAN WRITING AWARD
AFSA also sponsors the George Kennan Writing Award, given each year in honor of the best paper by a State Department employee enrolled at the National War College. This year’s winner was Michael Dixon.
Every year, AFSA has the honor of paying tribute to our colleagues who have given their lives while serving the American people. On May 4, Foreign Affairs Day, Sharon S. Clark’s name was added to the memorial plaques.

The first plaque was unveiled in the C Street lobby of the Department of State in 1933 by Secretary of State Henry Stimson. There are now two plaques honoring 237 members of the Foreign Service who have died in the line of duty.

AFSA President Susan Johnson and Under Secretary of State Maria Otero presided over the ceremony honoring Ms. Clark.

An office management specialist, she died of cerebral malaria in December 2010 while assigned to the U.S. embassy’s regional security office in Abuja.

Ms. Clark’s children and grandchildren were all present for the solemn ceremony, which underscored the importance of paying tribute to those who gave their lives in the service of their country. AFSA is honored to play that role for the Foreign Service.

On May 4, Foreign Affairs Day, Bryseton Bumgardner contemplates his grandmother, Sharon S. Clark, whose name is inscribed on the AFSA Memorial Plaque.
AFSA Scholarship Program: A Busy Year

BY LORI DEC, SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR

The AFSA Scholarship Program had a busy and successful year under the direction of the AFSA Scholarship Committee, chaired by Ambassador Lange Schermerhorn. Other committee members were: Deborah Odell (retired State representative), Jenae Johnson (active-duty State rep), Mark Petry (FAS rep), Yvette Malcioln (USAID rep), Joyce Namde (AFSA Governing Board liaison), Anne Cekuta (AAFSW rep) and Andrew Winter (ex-officio AFSA Governing Board rep). Through their hard work, and that of the AFSA Governing Board, more than $225,000 in scholarships and awards was bestowed on 99 children of Foreign Service employees. Please visit www.afsa.org/scholar for program details.

2012 Highlights:

- In January, Amb. Lange Schermerhorn was approved as the chairman of the AFSA Scholarship Committee.
- The estate of Mr. Daniel Kiang established the Kiang for Excellence Financial Aid Scholarship, a six-figure planned gift.
- Mrs. Laurence Flannery established an annual financial aid scholarship in the name of her late husband, Terence Flannery.
- Ruth Nay Skiles established the Victor H. Skiles Memorial and Ruth Nay Skiles Financial Aid Scholarship in perpetuity.
- Previously established perpetual or annual financial aid scholarships benefited from additional funding from six private donors or support from their donor contacts.
- By making a substantial donation, an anonymous donor took the lead in establishing an AFSA financial aid scholarship in tribute to the U.S. diplomatic personnel killed in the Benghazi terrorist attacks.
- The program implemented an online student application form and judge scoring system for the AFSA art and academic merit awards.
- Academic and Art Merit Awards, ranging from $500 to $2,000 each, were given to 26 Foreign Service high school seniors, totaling $40,500.
- After obtaining a legal opinion, the AFSA Governing Board approved changing the scholarship application criteria for Foreign Service youth, effective in the 2013-2014 school year. Only children of Foreign Service AFSA members are now eligible to apply for AFSA scholarships.
- Seventy-three students received undergraduate financial aid scholarships ranging from $500 to $4,000 each, for the 2012-2013 school year, totaling $186,600.
- New advertisements were developed for the scholarship program’s planned giving outreach.

Left to right: Maria Giuseppa Spigler congratulates merit winner Basil Smitham and his family.

Top left, clockwise: Richard Spigler, Maria Giuseppa Spigler and Marshall Richards; Priscilla Becker, Joi Chu-Ketterer and John Becker; unidentified group with Bradley Raynor; Patti Ryan; Nancy Leary, Charlotte Ellison and Suzanne Taylor; Scholarship Director Lori Dec.
Foreign Service Journal: A Good Thing Gets Better

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY, FSJ EDITOR

The Foreign Service Journal’s redesign, its first in 18 years and the culmination of a yearlong process, was unquestionably the highlight of the past year for AFSA’s flagship publication.

More than 200 guests attended the Oct. 11 launch party that unveiled the transformed magazine in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the Department of State. Deputy Secretary of State William Burns was one of several distinguished speakers to praise the Journal’s lively new design and thank AFSA for its advocacy on behalf of the Foreign Service and its members.

The magazine’s content continued to reflect the motto for the launch party, “A Good Thing Gets Better.” Fittingly, the October issue spotlighted “The New Foreign Service Generation,” while the November edition of “In Their Own Write,” our annual compilation of books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors, included more than 90 titles, the most ever.

Other 2012 highlights included April’s extensive coverage of family-member employment and related issues, and the September focus on China, which featured an interview with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

We also expanded the reach of the Journal Facebook page and by year’s end had almost 1,200 likes for the page and more than 73,000 impressions. And last but definitely not least, the new FSJ app for the iPad went live in January 2013.
Foreign Service Books: Growth in 2012

BY SHAWN DORMAN, FOREIGN SERVICE BOOKS EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Foreign Service Books, the AFSA book publishing division, expanded in 2012 as a major new book project got under way. Former Foreign Service Officer Harry Kopp, the author of Career Diplomacy, has delved into the AFSA archives and is writing a history of the American Foreign Service Association, to be published in 2014. Two more book projects are in the planning stages.

Inside a U.S. Embassy continues to be the anchor publication for Foreign Service Books, and the book did well in 2012. Since publication of the all-new edition in April 2011, AFSA has sold more than 20,000 hard copies and more than 1,000 digital copies, bringing the total for the three editions to over 100,000 copies. Successful sales led to a second print run in October. In 2012, the State Department purchased another 5,000 copies of the book for outreach and recruitment.

In April, Inside a U.S. Embassy received the gold medal from the Independent Publishers Book Awards in the “current events-foreign affairs” category. The book also won the bronze medal from the Axiom Business Book Awards in the “career” category. These two awards illustrate the way that the AFSA book continues to serve the dual purpose of being an introduction to the Foreign Service and diplomacy, as well as a career guide for those who might consider joining.

FSBooks was represented in 2012 at Book Expo America in New York City in June, the world’s largest international event in the publishing world. AFSA’s participation at the expo was sponsored by our distributor, Potomac/Books International. Inside a U.S. Embassy was on display and FSBooks Editor/Publisher Shawn Dorman attended as an exhibitor.

Inside a U.S. Embassy continues to be one of AFSA’s most successful outreach tools. The book can be found in more than 250 libraries worldwide, including libraries in Australia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Jordan, Cyprus, Greece, Rabat, Poland, Morocco, Netherlands and Canada, as well as nearly every state. The book has been adopted for more than 50 courses in the U.S. and overseas, and is required reading for a number of courses designed for military personnel. It is even available on the M.V Explorer, Semester at Sea’s shipboard campus, a college program administered by the Institute for Shipboard Education and academically sponsored by the University of Virginia.
AFSA welcomed 870 new members in 2012, most joining at the monthly luncheons held for entering Foreign Service classes at AFSA headquarters. While the number of total students joining the Foreign Service is down 28 percent from 2011 (due to a decrease in agency hiring), an overwhelming majority continue to choose to join AFSA.

We hosted 15 recruitment events this year, including three retirement luncheons for graduates from the Foreign Service Institute’s Job Search Program. AFSA is committed to providing excellent service and access to valuable member benefits, and protecting member interests.

Our success is evident by the rising membership numbers: AFSA membership increased by 1.5 percent in 2012, to a record total of 16,167 members.

**AFSA BY THE NUMBERS:**
- 70 percent of overseas posts have an AFSA representative
- 400 members participated in the AFSA-sponsored Zipcar program
- 568 Foreign Service community members are lifetime members of AFSA
- 1,954 members participated in one or more of the AFSA-sponsored insurance programs
- AFSA ended the year with a record 16,167 members
Benefits of AFSA Membership

**Labor Management Relations:** AFSA negotiates the regulations affecting employees’ careers. We work to make the Foreign Service a better place in which to work, live, and raise a family. Our network of AFSA post reps provides on-site assistance to overseas members.

**Congressional Advocacy:** AFSA is your advocate before Congress on issues affecting the careers of active members and the annuities of retired members.

**Ombudsman:** We work to resolve member problems with pay, allowances, claims, annuities, health care, and many other issues.

**Voice of the Foreign Service:** As the professional association of the Foreign Service since 1924, AFSA works to strengthen our profession and is ever vigilant for threats to the career Foreign Service.

**Grievance Representation:** AFSA’s legal staff provides hands-on assistance with grievance proceedings when your rights are violated.

**Outreach:** AFSA communicates the views of the Foreign Service on professional issues to the news media and directly to the general public.

**The Foreign Service Journal:** Our recently redesigned monthly magazine offers provocative articles that will keep you current on developments in the foreign affairs profession. The AFSA News section highlights issues affecting your daily life.

**Legal Services:** We offer free legal advice and representation on employment issues, including security and Office of the Inspector General investigations.

**Insurance programs:** You can chose among competitively priced insurance programs designed for the Foreign Service community, including professional liability insurance, accident and personal property/transit.

**AFSA Scholarships:** AFSA grants approximately 100 merit and financial need scholarships a year to Foreign Service family members.

**AFSA Awards:** Our unique awards program honors constructive dissent and outstanding performance.

**AFSA Web Site:** We provide online resources including a member directory and guidance on a range of useful topics for foreign affairs professionals.

**AFSA members are eligible for valuable discounts for:** Zipcar, Ford’s Theater and Brooks Brothers, as well as subscriptions to major foreign affairs journals.

**Esprit de Corps:** AFSA works to build a sense of common cause and professional pride between all Foreign Service members—active-duty and retired; officers and specialists; entry-level, mid-level and senior.
In 2012, AFSA strongly opposed increased and intensified congressional efforts to reduce or eliminate federal benefits as a means of reducing the federal deficit and using the resulting savings to fund non-related programs.

**Active Role**

In spite of our comparatively small size, AFSA continues to play an active role in the Federal and Postal Union Coalition, the umbrella organization of federal active duty and retired employee associations and unions. AFSA joined more than two dozen federal and postal unions in the “America Counts on Us” campaign to reach key congressional candidates in their home districts, emphasizing benefits issues and the importance of the federal work force.

Matthew Sumrak, our new associate coordinator for retiree counseling and legislation, served on the steering committee for the campaign and coordinated AFSA’s efforts to involve our members in town halls and campaign meetings. A registered lobbyist, Sumrak also joined the legislative team’s efforts on the Hill. Separately, AFSA President Susan Johnson sent a number of letters on behalf of AFSA to congressional decision-makers opposing cuts to federal benefits.

**Assistance and Counseling**

AFSA provided retiree members with assistance and counseling in more than 270 cases. While the issues were wide-ranging, most dealt with the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and Medicare (55), annuities (38), Social Security (19), death of annuitants (14), divorce (13) and survivor annuities (11).

Retiree VP Mary Ellen Gilroy and AFSA retiree Governing Board members worked to increase retiree membership through a pilot phone membership recruitment campaign, along with receptions for new retirees, sponsored by AFSA and DACOR, at the Foreign Service Institute.

Retiree Services continued to publish the bimonthly AFSA Newsletter, giving retiree and active-duty members concise information on department policies, explanations of federal benefits and news about the on-going debt-reduction process. In addition, we oversaw production of AFSA’s annual Retiree Directory and regularly updated the often-visited retiree Web page on www.afsa.org/retiree_services.aspx.

**New Programs**

Retiree Services added two new programs during 2012, beginning with sales of the Foreign Service Com-
Labor Management, Continued from page 50

reprimand. It also upheld penalties ranging from three-to-10-day suspensions when affairs were accompanied by aggravating factors.

AFSA’s concern, as also expressed by the Grievance Board, is that current regulations (3 FAM 4130 and 4139.1) do not clearly express the department’s position on relations with consenting partners without any “aggravating factors.” While we do not condone scandalous behavior or that which could subject the employee to coercion, we have considered a number of cases to constitute unwarranted intrusion into employees’ private lives. If this is a realm into which the department wishes to extend its influence, it should give employees better guidance. In addition, it should carefully examine the circumstances to determine if the conduct can “reasonably” be expected to impair the employee’s performance by reason of blackmail, as the 3 FAM requires.

Social Media Guidance

AFSA received more than a dozen requests for guidance on the department’s rules relating to the use of social media and the clearance process for publication of books, articles and blogs. In mid-November, when Public Affairs informed AFSA of its intended revisions to 3 FAM 4170, LM staff played a key role in reviewing the proposed changes and providing comments and suggestions by taking into account our members’ concerns and desires. We were informed that many of our comments would be incorporated into PA’s final revisions to 3 FAM 4170.

AFSA Welcomes APHIS

In late 2012, Foreign Service officers employed by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service selected AFSA to be their exclusive representatives. AFSA welcomes APHIS to the AFSA Foreign Service family.

Myriad Issues

The LM staff also assisted AFSA members with myriad issues stemming from their Foreign Service employment. We wrote letters to Atlas Van Lines on behalf of an employee whose household effects were infested with bed bugs; to Bank of America and Wells Fargo relating to several members’ primary residence; to Interstate National Dealers Service regarding a member’s residency as it affected his automobile warranty; to California State University regarding in-state tuition; to the State Department Federal Credit Union on behalf of the widow of a Foreign Service employee who died while serving overseas; to Audubon Village Apartments requesting the termination of an employee’s lease due to the employee’s assignment overseas; and to the clerk of a court in Florida regarding excusing an employee serving overseas from jury duty.

memorative Marker in May. This product recognizes the careers and contributions of Foreign Service employees and their spouses and partners.

We also inaugurated the “Federal Benefits Speaker Series.” Experts addressed issues of importance to retirees and those approaching retirement. Paula Jakub, vice president of the American Foreign Service Protective Association, described the coordination between the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program and Medicare; Dr. Judy Feder, a health policy expert and professor at Georgetown University, spoke about the future of Medicare; and Walton Francis, author of the Consumer Checkbook Guide to Federal Health Plans, explained how to compare federal health plans.

Understanding the differences in benefits between Medicare and the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program can be just as hard to explain as it is to comprehend, if gesticulating is any indication. Members of the audience ask questions of Dr. Judy Feder and Walton Francis at two different AFSA events.
Business and Accounting

BY FEMI OSHOBUKOLA, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Controller Kalpna Srimal, Director of Finance Femi Oshobukola and Assistant Controller Cori Nishi.

Expenses Budget 2012

- Scholarship $480,888 11%
- Professional Programs & Outreach $383,674 8%
- Administration $660,156 14%
- Policy & Legislative Affairs $242,947 5%
- Contribution $102,364 2%
- Membership Programs $1,844,795 40%
- Foreign Service Journal $946,127 20%
- Membership Dues $3,267,438 70%

Revenue Budget 2012

- Scholarship $481,899 10%
- Foreign Service Journal $562,500 12%
- Legislative Action Fund $36,000 1%
- Professional Programs & Outreach $162,614 3%
- Other $125,500 3%
- Insurance Premium $25,000 1%

* Approved budget figures. Audited financial statements for 2012 will be made available on the AFSA Web site.
** This figure does not include the portion of membership dues allocated to production of The Foreign Service Journal.