



**HECFAA**  
Hispanic  
Employee Council  
of Foreign Affairs Agencies

**HECFAA  
Newsletter  
March 2016**

HISPANIC EMPLOYEE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGENCIES

IN THIS ISSUE

# FAREWELL TO HECFAA'S OUTGOING BOARD

By: Josue Barrera, Former Vice President of HECFAA

Thank you for allowing me to serve you over the past few years. I was honored to be a part of the work HECFAA is doing to promote the contributions of Hispanics to our nation's foreign policy agenda. Though I will not be part of the leadership team this term, I will continue to contribute to the mission of this organization.

Almost 1500 people in the Department identify as a Hispanic or Latino. To reach the levels of the relevant civilian labor force, we need to double this number; to reach the level of the national population we need to triple this number. While we need to continue to bring people into the fold, lets also make sure we help them grow here. I've often said part of what kept me at State was finding not only meaningful work, but a community where I was welcomed and encouraged to keep growing. I encourage all of you to keep doing your part to make sure the Department is a welcoming and inclusive place to work.

## Farewell to Outgoing Board

Josue Barrera, former VP of HECFAA reflects on the service of outgoing board members.

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Help us highlight our work to your Facebook friends and Twitter followers.

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I'd like to acknowledge Michael Flores who served passionately as Vice President for Foreign Service. Michael led the way in presenting the HECFAA action plan to the Department's leadership. I'd also like to recognize long-time HECFAA board member, Frances Colon, who is a resolute voice for Latinas, not just in the Department, but in the many organizations outside of the agency at which she represents Hispanics in foreign affairs. Juliana Moreno also worked tirelessly to grow and account for our members and leveraged technology to facilitate the executive board's internal communication and effectiveness. I'm happy she will now lead our professional development initiatives!

Stay tuned as your continuing and new board members have many great ideas in the works that will encourage strong connections and support your professional growth.

¡Qué sigan adelante!

## MEET THE NEW BOARD

HECFAA thanks the previous board members for their service and welcomes our newest board members. The new members are:

**Vice President for Foreign Service - Greg Staff** is currently serving in the Political section at U.S. Embassy Paris where he covers human rights, migration and refugee issues, liaises with the



French Jewish community and tracks relations between France and Latin America. During Greg's first tour in Hermosillo, Mexico, he served as a Deputy ACS Chief and NIV adjudicator. Greg will next serve in Multilateral and Global Affairs at DRL. Prior to the Foreign Service, Greg served as Senior Legislative Assistant to Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez (IL 4) from 2004 to 2009 where he covered foreign affairs, defense, judiciary issues, and the environment and staffed the Congressman on the House Judiciary Committee. He also worked as a policy director at

America's Voice, an immigration policy and advocacy NGO. Greg is the son of Panamanian immigrants and calls Arlington, Virginia home. He holds a BA degree in Foreign Affairs and Latin American Studies from the University of Virginia.



**Vice President for Civil Service - Veronica Schnotala** is currently a Paralegal Specialist for the Office of the Legal Adviser, Diplomatic Law and Litigations and the Office of the Environment and Scientific Affairs. She previously served in Costa Rica and Hungary, working in the Embassies' consular sections. Veronica is a New York Bar licensed attorney and, prior to joining the Civil Service; she worked as an immigration attorney for approximately 3 years. Veronica has a Law Degree and a Political Science degree from Spain and a Masters in Law from George Washington University. She speaks Spanish, French, and Italian.



**Membership Chair - Kristina Rosales** joined the Foreign Service as a public diplomacy coned officer in 2013. She is currently conducting her consular tour in Sao Paulo, Brazil and briefly served at the U.S. Interest Section in Havana, Cuba. During her time in Brazil, she worked alongside HECFAA to coordinate Sao Paulo's first Hispanic Heritage Month celebration. Kristina has a Master's in Public Health and Latin American Studies from Columbia University. She received her undergraduate degree in International Affairs from the University of Miami. Her next assignment will be in Doha, Qatar after a year at FSI



**Professional Development and Speakers Committee Chair - Juliana Moreno** currently serves as a Foreign Affairs Officer in the Office of Central America Affairs in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. She is passionate about contributing to the Latino community. She serves as a volunteer recruiter for State and attends recruitment fairs and conferences to conduct informational sessions on student programs, scholarships, and career opportunities.

**Domestic Outreach Coordinator – Ivan P. Carpio** is a law-trained program manager and civil servant working in the Office of Western Hemisphere Programs in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL/WHP). He previously worked as a contractor in INL/WHP and interned in the Office of Peace Operations, Sanctions, and Counterterrorism in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO/PSC). Prior to joining the Department, Ivan served as an Assistant to the Chair of the United Nations Committee against Torture, an intern at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and as an intern with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

# DOCUMENTING OUR HISTORIES

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) is a non-profit organization that seeks to collect the oral histories of Foreign Service Officers. Oral histories broaden opportunities to study the past beyond a review of reports and artifacts. The ADST desires to diversify their collection to include more histories from the Hispanic community. Any retired officers of Hispanic heritage or officers in the retirement seminar are encouraged to share their stories. Visit [www.adst.org](http://www.adst.org) to view the full, catalogued collection of oral histories and information on how to participate. Exemplary oral histories from the Hispanic community include Ambassador Gutierrez's account (<http://adst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Gutierrez-Lino.pdf>) and Ambassador Romero's (<http://adst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Romero-Peter.pdf>).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Tuesday, March 29:** Join the Office of Personnel Management for *Federal Women Lead: Exploring Women's Journeys in Federal Service*. The discussion will include OPM's Acting Director Beth Cobert and other female executives in the Federal Government. The event will take place at the OPM building located at 1900 E Street, NW, Washington, DC from 2:30 pm. – 4 p.m. Please arrive by 1:30 p.m. to clear security and be seated. RSVP by Monday, March 28 to [fedwomenlead.eventbrite.com](http://fedwomenlead.eventbrite.com).

**Monday, April 4:** The Office of Civil Rights is pleased to announce that it will host a public speaking seminar for Employee Affinity Group (EAG) members and Veteran fellows from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. in HST Room 1205. Come learn what good public speakers look like, and how you can become one of them. RSVP by March 30 to [FlorescuAO@state.gov](mailto:FlorescuAO@state.gov) or [Rhonc@state.gov](mailto:Rhonc@state.gov). Attendees may participate by giving a 5-minute prepared speech or a short improvisational speech centered on a selected topic, also known as "table topics". All voluntary speakers will receive feedback from a pre-selected panel of skilled and knowledgeable colleagues. When you RSVP, please note if you are interested in participating with a prepared or improvisational speech.

### HECFAA SPEAKER SERIES

**Tuesday, April 12:** HECFAA invites you join us for our Speaker Series featuring Political Appointees at State. The panelists will discuss their unique career trajectories, the challenges

they have faced, and the lessons they have learned. Lunch will be provided. April 12 from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. HST in Marshall Center Room 1498. RSVP to [HECFAABoard2@state.gov](mailto:HECFAABoard2@state.gov) by April 9.

### **CONNECT WITH HISPANIC HILL INTERNS**

**Friday, April 15:** HECFAA will host the Spring 2016 intern cohorts of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) and the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute (CHLI). The purpose of the morning session is to introduce the interns to the role of the Department of State through a keynote speaker and a sampling of the work that Hispanic officers carry out day-to-day with a HECFAA panel. We partner with the Office of Recruitment to encourage the students to consider a career with the Department. If you have suggestions for a keynote speaker and/or would like to participate on the panel to talk about your path into the Department and your current role, please email [HECFAABoard2@state.gov](mailto:HECFAABoard2@state.gov). Everyone is encouraged to attend so that you can mingle with the students and/or volunteer to help with the event. Your participation is appreciated!

## **CAREER OPPORTUNITY**

Howard University is seeking a permanent Director to lead the Ralph Bunche International Affairs Center. The University will be accepting applicants until the position is filled. Please contact Dr. Anthony Wutoh ([awutoh@howard.edu](mailto:awutoh@howard.edu)) for the complete vacancy announcement.

## **FOSTERING MENTORSHIP**

This March, HECFAA launched its second year of its mentorship program. Mentors agreed to foster a professional relationship with a fellow HECFAA member throughout his or her career. Members working both domestically or abroad were encouraged to apply as anyone could benefit from this program! Ideally, the mentors and mentees will establish a lasting conversation about career goals and challenges, which should result in more of our fellow HECFAA members attaining leadership roles within the Department. Many mentor-mentee pairs have continued into this second cycle and we look forward to continuing to build on our successful matches! If you were unable to sign up during this latest round, look for applications to open up again in February/March 2017. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to [HECFAAMentorship@state.gov](mailto:HECFAAMentorship@state.gov).

# OUR INTERN AT WORK

One of HECFAA's Virtual Student Foreign Service interns, Gabriela Vargas, who is based at James Madison University, joined Diplomat in Residence Rich Jaworski at JMU's Career and Internship fair. She discussed internship opportunities and provided information about HECFAA's mission to promote diversity within the Department of State. Gabriela took the initiative to reach out to the Diplomat in Residence in order to help further HECFAA goals and get involved in promoting HECFAA's diversity agenda at her school. Her initiative shows that although HECFAA interns are based far from Washington, they can and do actively contribute to HECFAA's mission.

# HECFAA CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS

On Friday, December 18, 2015, HECFAA members based in the D.C. area gathered for a holiday potluck. Members networked and bonded over homemade, cultural food. Director General Arnold Chacon gave brief remarks.



# HECFAA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In the 21st Century, social media has changed human interaction and communication forever. With the advent of platforms such as Facebook, it is possible to stay and keep in touch with friends and acquaintances from all over the world. Thousands of miles of distance can be reduced to seconds; your colleagues from the other side of the world are just a click away. Thanks to social media, HECFAA members have been able to connect from Brazil to Indonesia and beyond. Our HECFAA interns are currently working to promote, update and grow our social media presence. You as a HECFAA member can do so, as well. We encourage you to invite anyone you think would be interested and could benefit from or support HECFAA's mission to like our Facebook page and to follow us on Twitter. If you have any suggestions for our social media presence, or if you have contributions for our social media platforms, please let us know by emailing [social@hecfaa.org](mailto:social@hecfaa.org).

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***STAY CONNECTED!***

[www.hecfaa.org](http://www.hecfaa.org)



[social@hecfaa.org](mailto:social@hecfaa.org)



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[@HECFAA](https://twitter.com/HECFAA)

*The mission of the **Hispanic Employee Council of Foreign Affairs Agencies** is to enhance awareness of the contributions of Hispanic employees to U.S. foreign affairs agencies. In addition, HECFAA is dedicated to the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Hispanics. With the fundamental belief that having a more diverse and representative Civil and Foreign Service contributes to and strengthens the ability of the United States to advance key foreign policy goals, HECFAA acts to develop the leadership abilities of Hispanics at U.S. foreign affairs agencies and of future leaders as well.*