

GLOBAL LINK

Association of American Foreign Service Women



(Left to right) Olivia Brown and Le Rowell present checks to the President of Martha's Table, Veronica Parke. The checks came from AAFSW (proceeds from BOOKFAIR) and the American Women's Club of Luxembourg. Martha's Table provides food, supervised learning activities, and one-on-one tutoring for low-income children in Washington, D.C.

Retiring with a PITtance (or Nothing)

Many Eligible Family Members (EFMs) who worked in part-time, intermittent, or temporary positions (PITs) between 1989 and 1998 are just finding out that they cannot receive retirement credit for those years. Prior to 1989, EFMs working in PIT positions could pay back into the retirement system for those years worked. Since May, 1998, the Family Member Appointment mechanism allows for retirement credit to be earned. However, people working as PIT employees between 1989 and 1998 may have lost up to nine or ten years of retirement credit, since the FERS law that went into effect in 1989 does not allow pay-backs to the retirement system for time worked in PIT positions.

The Director General's office hit a brick wall when discussing this issue with the Office of Personnel Management. According to OPM, pay-backs would have to be considered for all government part-time, intermittent and temporary employees—a very costly proposal.

However, unlike government employees in the United States who had more choice about which type of job to choose, family members overseas did not always have options. Even though we worked full-time, year after year, we were considered "PITs." (How many CLO Coordinators had contracts for 32 or 39 hours per week?) If we wanted to work, PIT positions were often the only option.

If this issue affects you, we would like to hear from you. We are interested in knowing who is affected and how many

(See "PIT Employees," page 7)

As Good as a Rest?

Changes. They run through every aspect of Foreign Service life: new locations, new cultures, new responsibilities. AAFSW seeks to serve the Foreign Service community effectively. Through the Millennium Project, we have identified new ways to connect with our members, as well as the need for new structures, income sources, and initiatives. However, our name continues to provoke unease.

Arguments for keeping the name focus on preserving our legacy (like the League of Women Voters, which serves all citizens) and avoiding the legal complications of a name change. Arguments for changing it emphasize the confusion the name creates as to our purpose and membership. Some members support keeping the acronym AAFSW, but changing the meaning. Others favor a complete overhaul.

The AAFSW Board would like to hear your opinions. Please take the time to send your ideas to the AAFSW office by e-mail, fax, or "snail mail" by the end of August (information on page 2)—even if you want to keep the name as it is. If you favor a change, use the following suggestions as a starting point. Feel free to mix and match as you see fit.

Names using the AAFSW acronym:

Advocates for American Foreign Service Well-being
 Advocacy and Action for Foreign Service Well-being
 Association for Advocacy and Family Support Worldwide
 Associates (Affiliates, Adjuncts, Alliance) of the American Foreign Service Worldwide

(See "Name," page 3)

BOOKFAIR INFO

BOOKFAIR'99 will be held in the Exhibit Hall of the main State Department building October 15-25. BOOKFAIR is the primary source of revenue for the AAFSW Scholarships for Foreign Service youth (see page 7 for a list of this year's winners) and local charities.

BOOKFAIR will begin with "Family Day" on October 15 from 2 to 5 p.m. for State Department employees and building pass holders and their families.

Volunteers are needed for BOOKFAIR! We need people to set up, cashier, restock, and clean up. Please save the dates and sign up on the form that will be included in your September *Global Link*. Questions??? Call the Bookroom at 202-223-5796.

Robin Jones
 Bookroom Manager

Awards Announced

The AFSA/AAFSW Academic and Art Merit Scholarships recognize the academic and artistic achievements of Foreign Service high school seniors at home and abroad. Students compete based on grade point averages, Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) scores, essays, letters of recommendation, and extra-curricular activities. Students also submit entries in visual arts, musical arts, drama, dance, or creative writing.

Winners receive \$1,000 awards. Honorable Mention winners, the Best Essay winner, and the Community Service winner receive \$200 awards. Volunteers from the Foreign Service community judge the competition.

For more information, contact the AFSA Scholarship Administrator, Lori Dec, at 202-944-5504 or dec@afsa.org.

Academic Merit Winners

- Tara Arness
- Erik Bigelow
- Marla Blaney
- Jamie Brown
- Emily Ellickson-Brown
- Tanya Goldman
- Ethan Hurdus
- Peter Hutchens
- Erik Kolb
- Catherine Koss
- Gregory Lucas
- Jennifer Lunstead
- Kurt Mitman
- Madjimbaya Namde
- Natalie Ostrander
- David Polansky
- Alyson Rose-Wood
- David Schmierer
- Julian Waldo
- Alexander Zvinakis

Academic Merit Honorable Mention

- Miriam Bensky
- Lauren Bruno
- Andrew English
- Alexander Hastings
- Christine Jensen
- Karin Lion
- Caroline Moats
- Rhian O'Rourke

Art Merit Winner

- Allen Cross (visual arts)

Art Merit Honorable Mention

- Peter Hutchens (musical arts)

Best Essay, Community Service

- Lindsay Rollins

Past PIT Employees Lack Retirement Benefits

(Continued from page 1)

family members believe that this issue merits approaching Congress. Those affected (including all CLO Coordinators from 1989 to 1998) should send the form below to AAFSW as soon as possible. Timing is important, because the longer we wait, the less important this issue will appear.

Please also contact AAFSW (attn: Susan Tyson) if you have Hill experience or would like to get involved in lobbying efforts to work on this and other projects. The time commitment can vary according to your availability.

Sample form:

POST	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	TOTAL YR MO
Abidjan	9/89	---	6/91								2 - 9
Lima						7/94	---	---	6/97		2 - 11

Total Number of Years and Months Worked in Overseas PIT Positions: 5 - 8

Clip and mail to:

AAFSW, 5125 MacArthur Blvd. NW, Suite 36, Washington, DC 20016

fax to: 202-362-6589

e-mail the equivalent information to: aafsw@erols.com

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No.: _____ E-mail Address: _____

POST	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	TOTAL YR MO

Total Number of Years and Months Worked in Overseas PIT Positions: