

BPIA BULLETIN

The Newsletter of the Association of Black Professionals in International Affairs

About the Association

BPIA is a charitable, non-profit membership association founded in 1989 to increase the involvement of African Americans and other people of African heritage in international affairs.

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C. Steven McGann, US Ambassador (ret.)

Yvonne Hubbard

Jeanne M. Toungara, Ph.D.

What's Inside

Spring and summer brought a number of noteworthy activities for BPIA and friends. On page 2, you can read about our most recent "Think and Drink" event, held June 27. It focused on the implications of cybersecurity and data privacy issues for the black community "and beyond." "The Future of Work" was the topic of a BPIA professional development workshop on March 30. See page 3 for details. BPIA members and leaders actively supported activities of other organizations relating to black engagement in international affairs during this period. Our friends in the Thursday Luncheon Group celebrated the organization's 45th anniversary at the State Department on June 24. Read their story on page 4. A conversation with Sally Schwartz, a longtime proponent of internationalizing the education of DC public school students, starts on page 5. We note the passing of Dr. Niara Sudarkasa, an early friend of BPIA and former president of Lincoln University, on page 2. Did you miss an opportunity to engage in international service in your youth? It's not too late. Learn about one woman's recent volunteer service experience on page 5. Meet two new BPIA Board members on pages 5 and 7. Check out important international fellowship opportunities and deadlines on page 3, and the Calendar on the inside back cover.

BPIA Bulletin is a quarterly publication. Persons interested in contributing/subscribing to the newsletter should email the Editor, Dr. Michele Cisco Titi, at upwardway17@gmail.com



“Cheers!” for June *Think and Drink*

Participants were nourished in body and mind at BPIA’s second *Think and Drink* forum, held June 27 at George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs. The event featured a buffet dinner, bar, networking opportunities, and an excellent panel of experts on the evening’s topic, “Data Privacy and Cybersecurity: Implications for Our Community and Beyond.”

The panelists were (*l-r, at right*): Selina Musata, a Ford-Mozilla Fellow supporting the privacy and security work at *Consumer Reports*; Bishop Garrison, Director of National Security Outreach, Human Rights First and former



Advisor, Science and Technology Directorate at DHS during the Obama administration; and Michaela Barnett, Senior Analyst, Accenture Federal Services, and CEO, Blacks in Cybersecurity, LLC. John Calvin Williams, BPIA’s Vice President for Business and Economic Development, served as moderator.



The panelists shared thoughtful insights with their audience.

Garrison, for example, saw potential problems with police having access to biometric data, e.g., facial recognition and DNA data, that might be used “in ways for which it was not intended.” Moderator “Cal” Williams noted the fallibility of such software. He shared an experience with facial recognition software that couldn’t recognize him when he was returning home tired from a trip. Musata cited the lack of legal personal data protection in the US as compared with Europe. “Europe is so much further down the tech line, she observed.” For her part, Barnett advised audience members to “Educate yourself about cybersecurity... Ask ‘how can I secure,’” for example, “‘medical devices?’” Participants engaged each other and the experts upon the conclusion of the discussion.

Farewell to a BPIA Friend

On May 31, Dr. Niara Sudarkasa passed into the ranks of the ancestors. She was 80 years old. A Florida native, she became a brilliant Africanist and cultural anthropologist, and a superstar in higher education. In the 1960s, she taught on the faculties of Columbia University, New York University, and the University of Michigan. She became the first female president of Lincoln University, the oldest historically black university in the US in 1986. (See obituary, <https://record.umich.edu/articles/obituary-niara-sudarkasa>.)

At Lincoln, Sudarkasa focused on internationalizing the curriculum. Under her leadership, the university became a valuable institutional partner to BPIA. She served as a keynoter at the organization’s October 1995 Biennial Conference, and received an International Service award for her leadership in international higher education. In 1996, several BPIA members participated in a forward-looking forum at Lincoln on “Internationalizing the HBCUs.” We honor her memory, and express our deep condolences to her family.

Mentoring Workshop on the Future of Work

by Dr. Sandile Hlatshwayo

On March 29, BPIA hosted a Professional Development & Mentoring Workshop on The Future of Work in International Affairs. The discussion was moderated by new BPIA Board Member Yvonne Hubbard (far right on panel, at right), a seasoned recruiter in international affairs, and featured Dr. Marcus Casey (center, on panel), a professor at University of Illinois - Chicago and a Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and Chuka Asike (left, on panel), a US diplomat.



Panelists noted the great degree of uncertainty around how ongoing technological advances will translate into potential job losses, with estimates ranging from 5 to 40 percent of jobs being lost, and some studies claiming that there might be a positive net effect on jobs. They also mentioned high variation across different fields. Workers in sectors with a high degree of routinization are most vulnerable—for example, where there are predictable physical labor inputs, data processing, or information collection needs, as in manufacturing, food service, and retailing. Sectors requiring interpersonal communications skills and judgment-based decision-making are likely to survive. For international affairs professionals, that's good news. Many of the roles we play will continue to require a high degree of human involvement. The panelists noted that, while some aspects of our work may soon be delegated to machines, this will allow us to place more focus on more complicated, non-routine tasks.

When asked what skill sets are necessary to prepare for the future, the panelists emphasized that international affairs professionals will increasingly need a more dynamic, people-oriented, quantitatively rigorous skill sets. Part and parcel of that dynamism will be ensuring one's education includes both a diverse range of knowledge (e.g., both the humanities and STEM fields) as well as expertise in a given area. This strategy will help make one's career more resilient in the face of an uncertain future.

The next Mentoring Workshop will be held in fall 2019 and a new round of mentors will be matched with mentees. Interested persons should email BPIA Board Member Sandile Hlatshwayo at sandileh@gmail.com.

It's Open Season for Graduate Fellowships — Apply Now!

Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship, Deadline: September 7, 2019 - <https://pickeringfellowship.org/graduate-fellowship/how-to-apply> *** **Charles B. Rangel Graduate Fellowship, Deadline: September 24, 2019** - www.rangelprogram.org/graduate-fellowship-program/ *** **Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship, Deadline: November 1, 2019** - <https://www.paynefellows.org>

TLG Marks 45th Anniversary

In 1973, William Davis and Robert Dumas, two former senior officers of the US Information Agency, founded the Thursday Luncheon Group. Its aim was to increase participation of African-Americans and other people of color “in the formulation, articulation and implementation of US foreign policy.” They met on the first Thursday of every month. The group’s year-long 45th anniversary celebration culminated on June 24 at a formal luncheon in the State Department’s venerable Benjamin Franklin Room. A veritable Who’s Who of African Americans in diplomacy was in attendance. (See the event video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zS8GxyYmpag>.)

Retired Ambassador Harry K. Thomas Jr. was the luncheon keynote speaker. In his remarks, he described TLG members “wealthy,” for having been “given the gift of being diplomats.” He called them wealthy “despite the wall of racism, sexism, and homophobia” built in front of them. Told, for example, that they “lack drafting skills and could not learn hard languages,” Thomas said, “TLG members kept scaling the wall.” He observed that they are helping a new generation of diplomats do the same today.

TLG gives its highest honor, the Pioneer Award, to “individuals of distinction” in the field of international affairs. Harry Thomas received this year’s award for his 34-year career, including as Ambassador to Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Zimbabwe; State Department Executive Secretary; and Director General of the Foreign Service. Former TLG President Fannie Allen’s award recognized her 39 years of public service with the US Army (she is a retired Lt. Colonel), USIA and the State Department. Dr. E.



Thomas Rowe, an Associate Professor and former Dean of the Josef Corbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, received the Pioneer Award as founder and director the International Career Advancement Program (ICAP), which helps diversify the ranks of senior management and policy makers in international public service. The program has some 550 alumni. Dr.

Richard O. Hope’s Pioneer award recognized his work as first director of research and

evaluation for the Department of Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute; and development of the State Department’s Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program, which trains members of minority groups, women, and individuals with financial need for careers in the US Foreign Service.

Hubbard, Toungara Join BPIA Board

In June, BPIA welcomed two new members to its Board of Directors. Yvonne Hubbard is an international development professional specializing in leadership, community development, advocacy, training, partnerships, and strategic planning for international NGOs and US federal (See **Board**, page 7)

Lady on a Mission

We first met Sally Schwartz at DC's Theodore Roosevelt High School Global Studies Campus, at a screening of the documentary film, *Beyond the Wall*. It tells the story of four DC African American high school students who journeyed to Beijing on a free study abroad program in 2009. One of them, Jeffrey Wood (center, at right), had never even boarded a plane before, but at the film screening 10 years later he was a US Foreign Service Officer headed for his first posting in Dhaka, Bangladesh, sharing his experience with students at his high school alma mater. Sally Schwartz was associate producer of the film. She was also instrumental in sending Wood off on that first sojourn.



Actually, Schwartz (left) has been engaged in the international education of DC public schools students since the 1970s. Currently, she is Executive Director of the educational non-profit Globalize DC, which she founded. It was a Globalize DC program that took Wood to China. We recently met to discuss her work. Asked about her background, she began, "I'm a DC native, third generation." The Woodrow Wilson High School graduate said her interests in Africa, the Caribbean, and race relations first emerged there. Dr. King's assassination during her senior year, and its aftermath in the city deepened her interest in the latter. "I was always interested in what's going on in DC," she said. "I always tried to reconcile the international and the local." Her passion for internationalizing the life experience of DC students developed early in her career, she said, when she "encountered a mindset" among some in DC "that the international arena was not 'for our kids.'"

But she knew that, "When you get kids out of their environment, it opens their minds, changes their view of the world and their place in it." That was what she wanted to do. (See next page)

Serving Abroad as a Short-Term Volunteer

Ever think about taking that standard-issue vacation to the next level? Lynette Aytch did. An early childhood development professional, Dr. Aytch spent two weeks in the remote mountain village of Ipalamwa, Tanzania, volunteering on a project that aims to reduce the near 50% rate of childhood stunting. She came away from that site of extreme material poverty richer for the experience.

Aytch participated in a volunteer service abroad program arranged by the NGO Global Volunteers, in coordination with her employer, ZERO TO THREE, a national non-profit membership organization that promotes the healthy development of infants and toddlers. After an intensive orientation, she spent full days accompanying Anastazia, a local professional home visitor and care provider, on visits to the homes of expectant mothers and families with children under three. Anastazia discussed issues with

(See *Aytch*, next page)

(Aytch, continued from page 5)

the mothers relating to maternal and infant health, breastfeeding, food sufficiency and hygiene, while Aytch talked with them about topics in infant development and parenting. Anastazia served as her interpreter. In her second week, Aytch also facilitated workshops and discussion sessions focusing on parenting and early childhood social emotional development.

A quick Google search can produce many volunteer travel organizations that provide a wide range of program options, some of them “free.” Global Volunteers participants pay a “contribution” for program participation. Costs are comparable to what people pay for vacation travel abroad, in Aytch’s case, just under \$3,000, including airfare. But unlike the costs, say, of a cruise, the contribution Global Volunteers participants pay is tax deductible!

Yet it was the intangible benefits of her volunteer experience that Lynette Aytch found to be priceless. She says she was afforded “an up close and personal experience interacting with families and children in their homes in circumstances that are hard to imagine.” “Many have to gather firewood and depend largely on what they can grow to eat.” There was frequently “no running water or electricity.” Yet, she relates, “To see the resilience, the strength, the smiles and graciousness they showed me as a stranger “shifted my own thinking about life.” Then there was the bonus of being in “a landscape that defies description in beauty and majesty.”

Asked what qualities someone needs to have an optimal volunteer experience abroad, Aytch responded, “An open heart and an open mind” as well as a willingness “to share your gifts and talents with others in places where they are desperately needed.”

(Schwartz, continued from page 5)

After completing undergraduate studies at Cornell University, Schwartz returned to Washington and taught social studies on the original faculty of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. She earned a master’s in history at Howard University with a focus on Latin America and the Caribbean, then worked in the non-profit sector before returning to education, this time as Director of International Programs for the DC Public Schools. During her tenure with DCPS, Schwartz separately established the non-profit DC Center for Global Education and Leadership, which would later become Globalize DC.

At Globalize DC, Schwartz said, we are “interested in how to address issues of equity and access to international education... to expose all kids to the world...” As an information clearinghouse for educators, students, parents and others, Globalize DC features opportunities that are mostly free. It implements programs now focusing chiefly on China and Japan, including experiences abroad and language learning programs, e.g., Japanese, unavailable in DC schools. Partnerships and volunteers help support this work. Persons interested in helping to advance Sally Schwartz’ mission to open the wider world to Washington DC’s young people can learn more at www.globalizedc.org.



On the Calendar

Wednesday, Oct. 16, 6:00-8:30 pm,
Fourth Annual BPIA Career Fair - Bunche
International Center, Howard University, 2218 -
6th St., NW, WDC 20059. For forthcoming
information: <https://www.iabpia.org>

Thursday, Aug. 29, 12:00 noon - 2:00 pm,
Panel, Lunch: The Cuba-US Bilateral
Relationship: New Pathways and Policy
Changes - *American Security Project, 1201*
Pennsylvania Ave., NW, WDC 20004. Visit:
<https://www.americansecurityproject.org>

Monday, Sept. 16, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon,
“A Changing Ethiopia: The Puzzle of
Ethiopian Politics,” *forum with Dr. Terrence*
Lyons, Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution,
George Mason University. US Institute of Peace,
2301 Constitution Ave., NW, WDC 20037. Visit
<https://www.usip.org/events>

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 10:00 am - 3:00pm,
Congressional Hispanic Leadership
Institute’s 8th Annual Trade &
International Affairs Symposium. *US*
Hispanic Community’s contributions to the global
economy, more. Top of the Hill Banquet &
Conference Center, 1 Constitution Avenue, NE,
*WDC 20002. Contact: **Juan Negron,***
jnegron@chli.org

Tuesday, October 22, 12:30 - 2:00 pm -
Book Launch: African Americans and
Africa: A New History *by Dr. Nemata*
Blyden, Associate Professor of History and
International Affairs. Lindner Family Commons,
Room 602, George Washington University Elliott
School of International Affairs, 1957 E St., NW,
WDC 20052. Visit <https://elliott.gwu.edu>

(Board, continued from page 4)

agencies. Over a 25-year career she has led major US and international interventions in developing countries to achieve economic and sustainable growth at the community level. Ms. Hubbard (right) has held senior management positions with international development NGOs, the Peace Corps and U. S. Department of State.



Jeanne Maddox Toungara (left) recently retired from Howard University, where she taught courses on contemporary Africa, the African Diaspora and Women in Africa. She has lectured for the State Department Office

of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, served as a Public Member on Foreign Service promotions panels, and is a frequent visiting lecturer at the Foreign Service Institute. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She earned BA, MA, and Ph.D degrees in African Studies and History at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Join BPIA Today!

Annual dues: General, \$50; Student, \$20;
Sustaining, \$195; Institutional, \$2,500

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