

**SLF***A Time of Service,**A Time of Need*

# SENIOR LIVING FOUNDATION of the AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE

Volume 19, Number 1

FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

March 2016

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN ~



**2015** was a busy and eventful year for the Senior Living Foundation (SLF) of the American Foreign Service. Your generous support and contributions made it all possible. SLF received over \$430,000 in individual donations, corporate gifts, and bequests in 2015. This generosity allowed SLF to carry out its primary mission of “taking care of our own,” providing support to retired Foreign Service personnel and their spouses who need help. Your contributions made it possible for SLF to defray the cost of home health care services, senior housing, long term care, and other services that contribute to the

health and security of the retired Foreign Service family.

SLF made two important advances in technology this past year. Our redesigned website – [www.SLFoundation.org](http://www.SLFoundation.org) – gives a comprehensive introduction to the Foundation and our work. Visitors are able to explore the ways in which we assist retirees and current FSOs as well as various support opportunities. The new SLF Facebook page was established to create an online community to share ideas and build connections. You can find a link to our Facebook page on the SLF website or you can log on to Facebook and search for “Senior Living Foundation.” Please take advantage of the information shared on the website and the Facebook page. Both platforms are a great way to learn how to get involved even more in the work of the Foundation.

On a sadder note, I am sorry to report the passing of Ambassador Robert O. Blake, the Vice Chairman of the SLF Board, on December 28, 2015. Many of you are familiar with his distinguished career in the Foreign Service, including his service as Ambassador to Mali. As one of the Foundation’s founders, he helped define the work of SLF through more than 25 years. Please learn more about Ambassador Blake’s work for the Foundation on the back of this newsletter. We honor his memory by continuing the work he and others began. He will be greatly missed.

We cannot fulfill our mission without your continued generosity. I thank you for your ongoing support of the Foundation and for making it possible for SLF to continue “taking care of our own.”

Sincerely,

*Marc Grossman*

## OVERVIEW

The Senior Living Foundation (SLF) strives to meet the needs of our Foreign Service colleagues through the commitment of "taking care of our own." The new format of this newsletter represents a fresh start for the Foundation. Despite the change in appearance, the focus remains to reach more people and let them know about the outstanding work being done at the Foundation. This past year opened new doors for SLF. We used 2015 as a time to reflect on our history, to refresh our communications, and to remain committed to our community. Read more to learn how we made this happen.

**REFLECT** – SLF started on a journey to preserve our memories and tell our stories. This mindset introduced The Oral History Project which involved gathering information from individuals who were there in the early stages of SLF. Participants were interviewed and their voices were recorded, in efforts to preserve the roots of this vital organization. The initial phase of the Oral History Project resulted in a collection of words spoken by those who helped mold the Foundation. Please visit the new SLF website ([www.slffoundation.org](http://www.slffoundation.org)) to listen to audio segments we have collected thus far. Look under the

"About Us" tab to hear the thoughts and motivations of our founders. Their stories reveal and confirm that SLF has maintained a proud tradition of "taking care of our own."

### SLF Mission Statement

*The mission of the Senior Living Foundation of the American Foreign Service is to provide support to retired Foreign Service personnel and their spouses (including surviving or divorced spouses) and, on the basis of need, to defray the cost of home health care services, senior housing, long term care insurance, or other senior services that contribute to the health and security of the retired Foreign Service family.*

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**REFRESH** – In addition to revising this newsletter, we spent the last year updating our website, [www.slffoundation.org](http://www.slffoundation.org). The new site offers stories from donors, information about the types of grants we make, and various ways for you to lend your support to our mission. Beyond The Oral History Project, you will find more photos from our events and additional ways to interact with the Foundation. A new way to reach us is through Facebook. Our Facebook page – linked through our website – provides a forum for the Foundation and our supporters to share articles, stories, and other items.

**REMAIN** – Through the past year, SLF continued its commitment to those in need. The assistance has taken many forms, including help paying for prescriptions, medically necessary dental work, aid paying for basic living expenses, and care management services. This last category is vitally important to ensure the continued care of our grant recipients as their needs change. Our Resource Center remains the cornerstone of our efforts to support those who need a bit of guidance in planning for the next stage in their lives. Beyond the retired Foreign Service community, the Foundation has received a number of calls in recent years from active duty colleagues who need help making decisions for aging family members. Regardless of who in our community asks, we can provide recommendations and connections to assist with decision making for one's self or a family member.

**As always, thank you for your continued support of the Foundation - our work would not be possible without your generosity!**

### DEPT. OF STATE LIAISONS

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## GRANT GIVING & RESOURCE CENTER

**\* A retired FS employee contacted the Foundation because he was unsatisfied with the care he was receiving in a rehabilitation center. His recovery was taking much longer than he expected.**

✓ *SLF arranged for a care manager with an extensive background in nursing to visit the retiree. The care manager agreed with the retiree that more could be done by the staff. The staff reacted positively to the care manager's suggestions and the retiree gained the confidence needed to advocate on his own behalf.*

**\* A 74-year-old retired Foreign Service employee contacted SLF requesting assistance to pay her outstanding medical bills. She lived alone in a rented house.**

✓ *SLF paid the balance due on the medical bills and helped the retiree sign-up for supplemental insurance. SLF also paid for medically necessary dental work, prescription eye glasses, and reimbursed her for prescription copays. The Foundation provides a recurring monthly grant to help cover basic living expenses, supplemental insurance, and prescription copays.*

**\* Two active duty FS employees posted overseas contacted SLF requesting resource information as they made plans for their elderly parents who lived stateside.**

✓ *SLF referred them to the Crisis Management Officer at the Family Liaison Office. From there, they could learn about Emergency Visitation Travel and other programs designed to help employees dealing with long distance eldercare issues.*

**\* Human Resource Service Center referred the widow of a retired FS employee two months after his death. The necessary paperwork was submitted shortly after the retiree's death. However, a mistake on the death certificate delayed the claim process.**

✓ *SLF was able to provide three emergency grant payments for the widow to help with her expenses while the certificate was being amended.*

**\* A 76-year-old widow of a retired Foreign Service Specialist moved closer to her family and friends. She also wanted to save money on rent after her husband's death. Her pension income was based on her husband's**

**limited career with the State Department and Social Security. She had cared for her ill husband for many years before his death. The couple had no savings.**

✓ *SLF provides a monthly grant for basic living expenses. The Foundation also paid for uncovered medical expenses, medically necessary dental treatment, and dental insurance.*

**\* An 80-year-old Foreign Service employee is retired on disability and has received assistance from the Foundation for several years. She lives alone in a rented apartment.**

✓ *The Foundation has paid for medically necessary dental work and currently provides a monthly grant to help pay for uncovered medical expenses, housecleaning, and transportation to medical appointments.*

**\* A retired FS employee contacted SLF after she realized she would need help caring for her husband who had recently been diagnosed with dementia.**

✓ *SLF suggested appropriate professionals who were familiar with the local services available, and a meeting was scheduled within a week.*

### SLF BOARD MEETINGS



The SLF Board of Directors meets twice a year at DACOR Bacon House, once in the spring and once in the fall. This group of distinguished Foreign Service Officers reviews the progress that SLF has made in that six month period and discusses the business matters of the Foundation. These are pictures from the 2015 meetings. Please view more SLF Board Meeting pictures under "Events" on the SLF website.

### SENIOR BROWN BAG EVENT



On Friday, August 7, 2015, the State Department's Eldercare Support Group held a Brown Bag panel discussion in partnership with the Senior Living Foundation. The topic centered around alternatives to nursing homes. Christine Bitzer from Seabury Resources for Aging, Larna Grenadier from Foggy Bottom West End Village, and Karen Skeens from Goodwin House at Home gave information on their specific programs and services. Participants learned how they can offer continuing care to their elderly loved one outside of a full-time residential setting.



### FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY



Above, from left to right: Ian Houston, AFSA; Joan Clark, SLF Board; Susan Cimburek, DACOR; Paula S. Jakub, SLF.



The 2015 Foreign Affairs Day was held at the Department of State on Friday, May 1. This annual "reunion" brings together active duty and retired Foreign Service Officers. A variety of presentations and seminars take place during the day-long event. The Senior Living Foundation hosted an information table, along with other organizations that serve the Foreign Service community. It was a great opportunity to share the work of the Foundation with others and to let them know SLF is available to assist.



### SLF DONORS

The Senior Living Foundation appreciates the gifts we have received from Corporate Donors. Ambassador Marc Grossman, SLF's Board Chairman, graciously accepted contributions from Aetna Inc., DACOR and Express Scripts Inc. We thank our industry partners for supporting the mission of the Foundation. Your contributions help continue the proud tradition of "taking care of our own."



Above: Ambassador Grossman with Thomas Kirkpatrick and Pamela Barrett from Aetna Inc.



Left: Ambassador Grossman with Raymond Ewing from DACOR.



Left: Ambassador Grossman with David Queller and Timothy Wentworth from Express Scripts Inc.

## EXPRESSION OF THANKS

*The Senior Living Foundation would like to express our thanks to the following individuals who made gifts to the Foundation in 2015:*

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Cox, Nancy A

Crigler, T Frank  
Crockett, Lelah E  
Crooke, Elaine F

**The Foundation is grateful to have received memorial donations in memory of:**

<i>Norman Achilles</i>	<i>Raul Holguin</i>
<i>Richard C. Barkley</i>	<i>James Huffman</i>
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<i>Marvin J. Hoffenberg</i>	<i>Michael Yovanovitch</i>

**What a wonderful way to remember those who have gone before us.**

Cox, Rita	Cross, Kumiko K
Cox, William B	Crowley, Ileana R
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- **Ayco Charitable Foundation**
- **DACOR**
- **Express Scripts Inc.**
- **Foreign Affairs Retiree Association of Maryland**
- **Foreign Service Group - Central Texas**
- **Preferred Medical Claim Solutions**

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### SAVE-THE-DATE

On **September 15, 2016**, SLF will offer our 7th Planning for Change Seminar. Attendees to this half-day event will learn about advances in medicine, important legal and financial considerations for estate planning, and the ins-and-outs of hospital stays and transitions to home care. More information will be available on our website over the summer.

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## FACEBOOK

We are happy to announce that SLF officially has launched a Facebook page! We wanted to establish an online community to share ideas and build connections. Facebook will also serve as a platform to keep our SLF supporters informed and educated. Please take time to join the page! Just visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and type "Senior Living Foundation," in the search bar and hit the "Like" button! **It's that simple.**

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**SLF Executive Director, Paula S. Jakub with SLF Board Advisor, Stuart E. Branch at a conference hosted by the Foreign Service Retirees Association of Florida.**



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## LOSS OF A FOUNDER

*On December 28, 2015, Ambassador Robert O. Blake passed away peacefully at his home. His distinguished diplomatic career is well known to many in the Foreign Service family: service at USUN during the Cuban Missile Crisis; DCM in Kinshasa and Paris; and Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. However, his commitment to diplomacy went beyond the tenants of his official duties. Ambassador Blake had a great passion for the people with whom he served, the officers and their families.*

*In the late 1980s, Ambassador Blake was a member of the Findley-Burns Group, a group of distinguished Foreign Service Officers tasked to develop our mission and to take the*

*initial steps in making the Senior Living Foundation a reality. Bob Blake identified several names of possible donors and sent them letters in July 1994. Thus began our fundraising efforts on behalf of the SLF.*

*For more than 25 years, he devoted much of his time and energy to organizing the Foundation, helping to define its mission, and building support for it within the Foreign Service community. He served as the Vice Chairman of the Board from the Foundation's inception until his death. As his volunteer commitments increased in retirement, Ambassador Blake never failed to make time for the work of the Foundation, seeking to ensure its success and fulfillment of its mission of "taking care of our own."*

The Senior Living Foundation is grateful to have received bequests from:

- Mr. Norman Achilles
- Ms. Virginia King
- Mr. Cecil Richardson
- Ms. Mikiko Stebbing



The Foundation thanks you for remembering us in your will. Your legacy will live beyond the years that you served your country.

These individuals believed in our mission of "taking care of our own." Their bequests will make an immense difference in the Foundation's ability to assist Foreign Service colleagues.

## CONTACT US

If you, or someone you know, need the services of the SENIOR LIVING FOUNDATION, please contact us:

- phone (202) 887-8170
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- email [info@SLFoundation.org](mailto:info@SLFoundation.org)

*The Foundation considers each case individually and maintains total confidentiality.*