

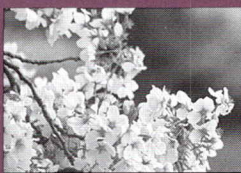


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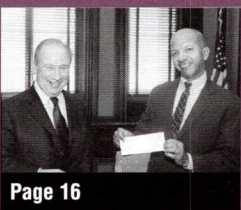


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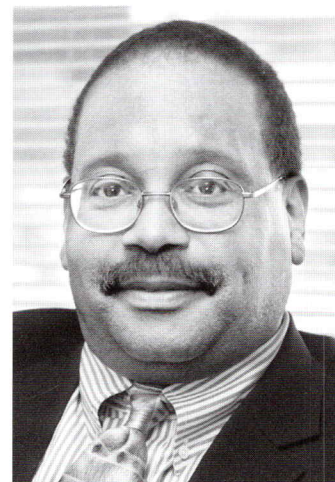
Mary Murphy, who served as the Fund's Ombudsperson from October 1999 to March 2005, is succeeded by Wilbur Hicks, a U.S. national. Hicks, who holds a J.D. from the University of Maryland Law School, brings to the Fund over 30 years of experience in both academia and the private sector. Shortly before Hicks assumed the post on April 1, Staff News met with the two of them to discuss their views on the institution and Ombudsperson function.

In the past few years, the Fund has been making an effort to improve its internal communications. Have you seen progress in that area?

Murphy: Yes and no. There are some excellent communication mechanisms—for example, information on security issues is now out quickly. But it's easy to forget that internal communications isn't all "From: To." One area that could be emphasized more is listening to the staff more often. In most organizations, you'd find that almost all communications go from someone in management to the staff, with very few in the other direction. Having been a manager, I can tell you that I often didn't know what most of my staff were thinking about and what their concerns were. So consistent dialogue is very important, and I think we could make a bit more progress in that area.

Mr. Hicks, you come to us with a wealth of experience, having served first as Princeton University's Ombudsman for four years, then as Shell Oil Company's Ombudsman for eight. What prompted you to leave Shell Oil and join the IMF?

Hicks: I've always looked upon growth—both intellectual and professional—as important. Over the past year or two, I've developed an interest in the international scene. I'd known Mary for her work at the IMF, and I'm from Baltimore originally. When this opportunity presented itself, it seemed a really good fit—to learn in an international environment and to return to home base.





L-r: Wilbur Hicks, the incoming Ombudsperson, with Mary Murphy, the outgoing one. Says Hicks: "I'm here to determine what's in the best interest of fairness, honesty, and integrity."

Ms. Murphy, as the former Director of Human Resource Management at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, you have considerable experience with international organizations. Is there any advice you would give Fund management as it proceeds with the Review of Fund Employment, Compensation, and Benefits?

Murphy: With something as fundamental as this review, it's important to have a credible, effective,

and ongoing staff consultation process. At all stages, staff need to be informed of what's going on and, to the extent possible, involved in aspects of the decision-making process. The 2003 staff survey identified the compensation and benefits system as one of the major motivators for Fund employment, so I do think it's important for management to know the staff's views. I also strongly believe that the staff, as a whole, is quite capable of coming to understand things that are in the interest of the organization, even if, as individuals, they might find this somewhat less than optimal.

Are there any particular risks that a review like this would hold for the institution?

Murphy: Of course there are risks. You are looking at one of the fundamental reasons why someone is working in the organization. These systems tend to be interwoven, and as you make changes to one part, there may be effects that you don't anticipate. I've seen that in other organizations. But what's important is dialogue—continuing to talk about it and explain the rationale as things move forward.

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If indeed this review does bring a lot of changes, would you expect the Ombudsperson's caseload to increase?

Murphy: It's hard to say. The last categories of employment review did bring a momentary surge in cases. But afterward there was a dramatic drop in cases, because then the Fund's policy was much clearer. If there are individuals for whom the impact of the changes is negative, it's likely they might consult with the Ombudsperson. It just depends on how it's done, whether people understand it, and whether there are specific groups that are hurt.

Hicks: Sometimes it isn't the results that cause people to have concerns, it's the perception. When there's a dialogue, even if your point of view doesn't prevail, you can walk away feeling "I was heard; I made my point." But if you perceive that the other side doesn't regard anything you have to say as important or meritorious, it's not the "what" that happens, it's the "how." And that could bring a lot of cases.

"The independence of the Ombudsperson—the fact that we do not take orders from anyone in the organization—is extremely important to staff."

—Mary Murphy

In your 2004 report, you assert that "something can often be learned about human resource management in an organization from an analysis of the disputes and complaints that arise." What have you learned about human resource management in the IMF?

Murphy: I have gained an even greater appreciation for the difficulties of managing in an international environment. I already knew it was hard, but seeing the whole picture—the employees' and the managers' perspectives—reinforces that view. You have people from varied backgrounds, diverse management traditions, and differing cultural expectations all coming together to create a more unique work environment. When it works, it's wonderful; when it stops working, it becomes very difficult to resolve. The basis of human resource management in an organization is communication.

Mr. Hicks, you previously worked for a U.S. company and, before that, a U.S. university. What do you see as the challenges that might be posed by an international organization?

Hicks: Shell would probably take issue with your describing it as a U.S. company. Shell U.S. was my base, so in that sense, you're correct. But Shell U.S. is a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, which employs a large international staff. And although Princeton University students are primarily American, the staff and the faculty are drawn from countries all over the world.

My whole career has been spent looking at the question of how people get along, how we work together, and how we talk to each other when we're so different—yet, at the core, so similar. Working with people from different cultures with different experiences and different expectations—to me, that's a wonderful job. When you see people working together in a common enterprise and it works, there's nothing more uplifting. When it doesn't work, it's an interesting challenge. How do I make this better? What

understanding can I bring to this? What avenues can I create for these people to talk to each other? These are the sorts of challenges that make you want to get up in the morning and go to work.

And that was one reason you were attracted by the IMF.

Hicks: Absolutely. How many organizations employ people from 130 different nations? What an opportunity!

Some see the Ombudsperson's role as that of a conciliator, others as an arbitrator of disputes. Still others view it as that of a counselor. How do you see it?

Hicks: All of those, except perhaps the arbitrator. A conciliator is a good word—someone who fosters dialogue. Mary hits the nail right on the head. It's the communication. How can I encourage management

to open up? How can we create opportunities for management to hear what staff have to say? You're a facilitator, a conciliator, and a mediator who encourages and fosters communication. But a neutral one—that's the key. You don't take sides; you try to help resolve issues by giving respect and dignity to all perspectives.

Murphy: The Fund has had an Ombudsperson for more than 25 years now, and the role is well defined. The independence of the Ombudsperson—the fact that we do not take orders from anyone in the organization—is extremely important to staff. The counseling role is also important. Many people will come and say, this is the way I feel—am I right to be bothered by what has just happened? Or am I blowing this out of proportion? They come to the Ombudsperson to explore their problem and define their options. In most instances, though, they prefer to take charge themselves and not let anyone know that they've been here. When I started, about two-thirds of the people who came to see me did not want anyone to know they've been here. Later, that rose to three-fourths. Many came just for information they should have been able to get from their department or HRD. It's difficult to find definitive human resource policy information, because the GAOs are often out of date and amended by Staff Bulletins or memos to management. Just finding out the rules can be a big problem, and that's an area where the Ombuds can help.

As our new Ombudsperson, do you see yourself as an advocate for staff, management, or both?

Hicks: I see myself as an advocate for the community of people who work here. The question should always be, "What's in the best interest of the Fund?" Sometimes the best interest of the organization will be displeasing to management; sometimes it will be displeasing to the employee who has a concern. But I'm here to determine what's in the best interest of fairness, honesty, and integrity.

In the private sector, lawsuits are possible. Here, staff don't have any recourse outside the Fund's dispute resolution system.

Hicks: That's a challenge. In my previous jobs, employees could use the possibility of a lawsuit as leverage. People can hold out the threat, "If we don't resolve this, I have external resources that I can bring to bear to fix this." On the other hand, I think it makes people more willing to listen and realize that the best opportunity—in fact, the only opportunity—for resolution is here, internally. I think it encourages people to work a little harder at resolution.

Murphy: There are advantages to working for the Fund that individuals working in a corporate environment lack. If not having access to the courts is the only thing you don't have, it seems to me that's a relatively minor problem. And the Fund does have a judicial system, with a grievance committee and an administrative tribunal. So there is a process, albeit a lengthy one. But if you ask anyone about taking a lawsuit into national courts, you will find that's also an expensive and lengthy system. So I don't think there's that much missing.

Did you have a high profile as Ombudsperson at Shell and at Princeton, or were you someone who was rarely seen or heard?

Hicks: A high profile is not desirable—accessibility is what's desired. You want to be seen as a facilitator, not the one who gets the credit. So if you're in this job for recognition, you're in the wrong job.

At both Princeton and Shell, I was asked to set up the ombuds program. One of the things that initially attracted me to the IMF is that this is a well-established program—almost one of the original ones. In my previous positions, the profile of the Ombudsperson was always evolving, because the post was so new. But I'm happy to say that both of those programs continue to thrive and are now part of the way those organizations do business.

What happens when you see a systemic problem—something that's not just an isolated incident?

Murphy: Well, there's a history of that in the IMF. We have a 401K plan for contractual staff and an ethics office partly because previous Ombudspersons identified the need to look at these issues in their annual reports. The Ombudsperson's annual reports have always presented general issues arising from ombuds casework

for management to consider. When the Ombudsperson's voice joins with other voices, it does, I think, resonate. And there's been a fairly successful track record of response. The Ombudsperson's annual report is released to staff and management at the same time, so this is something that everyone sees.

Have you ever been asked to give your opinion on how to resolve a systemic issue?

Murphy: Not in an explicit, formal sense, but certainly I've had an ongoing dialogue with people who work on these issues and with senior managers. The Ombudsperson is a good source of information on how processes are actually working and how they are viewed by those affected by them.

Over the next few years, what do you see as the IMF's most important issue?

Murphy: The review will, of course, be an important issue, but the Fund also has to continue its internal dialogue on discrimination and its impact. While I have seen little overt discrimination during my five-year term, the patterns of subtle discrimination are evident and certainly of concern to a significant portion of the Fund's workforce. You have to find a way to ensure that staff from all backgrounds, genders, races, and nationalities feel that they have an equal opportunity to advance through the organization. A significant number do not, at this stage, feel that's the case. You saw that in the staff survey—staff from certain minority groups have both witnessed and experienced discrimination at higher rates than the rest of the staff.

I think people underestimate the degree of skill and sophistication required to be a manager in an international organization. On the whole, the Fund has many good managers. The biggest challenge is to build on that. One thing that would help—to come back to the original issue that I put forward—is communication.

If there's a single piece of advice you could give your successor, what would it be?

Murphy: Well, I'm not sure I could give him any advice. He, in fact, was my instructor in "Ombuds 101"—he's been an Ombudsperson a lot longer than I have. I would say, though, you need to spend a great deal of time listening and asking before you can feel comfortable.

Is there anything you'd like to know about the Fund?

Hicks: My theory is that the problems Fund staff face exist in all organizations. What's unique about this organization is that you have so many different backgrounds represented. I don't have any magic formula for dealing with that—I have some skills to deal with it, but this is a unique setting, and I have to find out what it's all about.

Anything else?

Murphy: I leave the organization with tremendous respect for everyone here—from the top to the bottom. I've rarely worked anywhere where people

have been more dedicated to the organization. The sense of mission, the sense of purpose, and the desire to achieve are extremely high in this organization—that's its strength, and I hope it will endure.

When you have an organization of people who are highly educated, highly verbal, and high-achieving, people have to remember to listen. There are many parts of the Fund where people have a good dialogue, and I think it's important to reward and encourage it.

Hicks: In encounters I've had thus far with people here, I've heard nothing but accolades and tributes of respect for Mary. I have huge shoes to fill. I will work hard to earn the respect that Mary has brought to this office. ♦

"While I have seen little overt discrimination during my five-year term, the patterns of subtle discrimination are evident..."

—Mary Murphy

Bridging the gender communication gap

What's so different about men's and women's communication styles? And how might that account for differences in how the two sexes are perceived in the workplace? Deborah Tannen, bestselling author and Professor of Linguistics at Georgetown University, addressed these questions and more at the opening session of the Fund's 2005 Diversity Speakers Program.

Appearing on March 8, International Women's Day, Tannen spoke on gender communication differences, the subject of many of her best-known writings. Leena Lahti, the Fund's Diversity Advisor, noted in her introductory remarks that Tannen's book *You Just Don't Understand* was on the *New York Times* bestseller list for four years. The book also made bestseller lists in several other countries—a testament to the universality of Tannen's appeal.

Tannen, whose down-to-earth style made her speech highly accessible, noted that she first became interested in gender communication by accident. A sociolinguist, she specializes in the study of language in a social context. In one of her first research projects—a study of best friends in which she was supposed to look for repetition in speech—she happened to notice a striking nonverbal pattern. Almost without exception, girls looked at each other head on, while boys and men sat at angles, or even parallel, to each other. Were her male subjects disengaged? No, Tannen explained. This was simply their conversational style.

That first study led to subsequent ones in which Tannen observed male and female conversational rituals and noted marked differences in the two sexes, beginning at a tender age but seen consistently throughout life. After her books became famous, many companies asked her to study how men and women advanced through the corporate ranks and determine what might account for differences in how quickly they progressed. A common phenomenon, she said, was that women were often stuck at the same level or resigned after 5 years, whereas men, over the same period, usually moved up.



"You should become an observer of your own interaction," advises Deborah Tannen.

After shadowing her subjects, tape recording them, observing interactions, and chatting informally with employees both hierarchically above and below her subjects, Tannen concluded that women are in a "double bind." That is, they face a conflict between being a woman in a position of authority and simply acting the way a woman is supposed to act. The opposing cultural expectations for each role, Tannen found, put working women in a no-win situation.

When women don't get promoted, Tannen said, it is often because they are seen as lacking confidence. Throughout their lives, women tend to be more inclusive than men. So in the workplace, women in charge of a project usually seek out everyone's views. Men won't necessarily feel the same compulsion to be inclusive. The result? Women can be misinterpreted as indecisive or needing the help of others, when in fact they may simply be trying to give everyone the opportunity to express themselves.



Tannen's lunchtime talk, open to all staff, was well attended.

Tannen also observed that women are also often reluctant to put themselves above the others—to shine and take the credit when their teams accomplish something big. Since it's usually the person who takes the credit that gets the credit, such women lose out. A reluctance to put oneself above others can be seen as a lack of confidence or, worse yet, a lack of competence.

Women use a more indirect speaking style, couching their requests in such phrases as, "Do you think

it's possible..." or "Could we try..." They tend to use this style most often when addressing a male subordinate—a habit, Tannen explained, that makes them appear tentative and lacking in authority. Negative verbal tics—such as the tendency to say "I'm sorry" too much—are particularly damaging.

Men, on the other hand, use a more direct conversational style, using expressions like "I need" or employing the command form of the verb. When men fail to get promoted, Tannen said, it is often because they are perceived as arrogant. Men don't find themselves in a double bind, however. The way men act in positions of authority correlates with society's expectations of masculine behavior.

So should women try to adopt the male conversational style? No, said Tannen; that style conflicts with society's cultural expectations of women. The solution is simply to become more aware of style differences between men and women and the possible misinterpretations that could result. Men should likewise be alert to these differences.

"You should become an observer of your own interaction," Tannen concluded. ♦

MD's second town hall draws large turnout



Above (l-r): The Managing Director shares a light moment with Anne Krueger and Agustín Carstens. At right, Roger Nord (Advisor, AFR) asks the MD how he proposes to address the tension between the Fund's limited available resources and its ever-expanding mandate. The April 7 town hall meeting was the latest in a series of management initiatives to further its dialogue with staff.







Spring in Washington



Knowledge of Washington in the twentieth century gives me the freedom of the city; but knowledge of spring gives me the freedom of the world.
—Louis J. Halle, *Spring in Washington*

Spring here conjures up so many images—week-end picnics, cherry blossoms, leisurely strolls along the Potomac, softball on the mall. Besides these obvious signs of the season, however, there's a lot occurring in nature that few of us really understand. That's what prompted Tom Walter, Assistant Editor (EUR), to sign up for "Spring in Washington," a course offered jointly by the USDA Graduate School and the Audubon Naturalist Society.

Combining classroom study and field trips, the class explores the changes that occur in nature from the first hint of spring in January to the height of the season's brilliance in May. Led by J. Kent Minichiello, Marcia Minichiello, and Stephanie Mason of the Audubon Naturalist Society, the students examine the budding and blooming of trees and flowers, birds and their migratory patterns, and myriad other signs of spring. "It's a lot of fun," says Tom. "I knew little about nature and birding when I signed up. Some people in the class know a lot, but it's not required. Everyone is welcome."

From a naturalist's viewpoint, the D.C. area is quite special. On the cusp between the coastal plain and the piedmont, Washington boasts a richer variety of species of plants and animals than most other regions of the country. As the seat of the federal government, Washington is also home to the Smithsonian and other key scientific institutions, which attract scientists and others with a naturalist bent. The combination of these two factors has helped make Washington a major center of nature writing in America from the nineteenth century to the present.

"When we think of nature writing, we usually think of places like New England or maybe Yosemite," explains Tom. "But many prominent nature writers, such as Rachel Carson and Roger Tory Peterson, and other writers inspired by nature, like Walt Whitman, have lived and worked right here in Washington." To get an appreciation for the area's importance to nature writing, the class—which is really part science, part literature—is reading *From Blue Ridge to the Barrier Islands*, a compilation of nature essays on the mid-Atlantic region written over the past couple of centuries.

But the class's centerpiece is Louis J. Halle's delightful 1947 classic *Spring in Washington*. On field trips to places like Rock Creek Park, Dyke Marsh, Roosevelt Island, the C&O Canal, and Great Falls, the class retraces Halle's footsteps and looks for the same species he described in his book some 60 years earlier. Part of the book's appeal, says Tom, is seeing what's changed—including, unfortunately, the damage caused by ill-planned human encroachment into natural areas—and what's remained the same since Halle's era.

Adding to the book's appeal is Halle's dual persona as the quintessential Washington bureaucrat on the one hand and a freedom-loving individualist on the other. A State Department employee by day, Halle was an amateur naturalist who did much of his observation of the natural world before work in the morning or over the weekend. In the book, his keen reflections on nature are interspersed with wry commentary. Comparing Washington bureaucrats to worker bees, he pokes fun at people too preoccupied with their petty everyday concerns to notice the larger forces of nature.

"I have looked through the Washington newspapers in season without finding any account of the arrival of ducks or the visitations of gulls, although they reported the visit of a French functionary and the return from her wintering grounds in the south of somebody's wife. It was all news of the hive, without a word of events in the outside world," Halle writes.

"He talks about the hive we live in," Tom says. "We're just totally focused on what's going on within the hive, which for us would be the IMF." This tendency to get caught up in everyday concerns is normal, and even Halle, for all his time outdoors, writes of struggling with it.

"Here in the evening in my cell at home my mind continues to operate as it has all day in my office cell, revolving the problems of the moment, which press in upon it and shut out everything else," Halle writes. "If I should attempt to read a poem, however



Bloodroot—or *Sanguinaria canadensis*—is a spring ephemeral that disappears entirely by early summer. This one was spotted in Rock Creek Park in early April.

great, though it opened up all the dimensions and perspectives of the universe, it would mean nothing and leave me incredulous that it had been written at all and well regarded. It would not fit into my world."

The key, says Halle, is to take a break from it all and enjoy nature, the best medicine. "No doctor ever prescribed a view of the open world for me, though it was the tonic I needed, rather than something to take in a glass before meals."

Though Halle writes of the 9-to-5 world with a hint of derision, it's interesting to note that he took his job as a political scientist for the State Department quite seriously. In addition to 10 or so nature books, he also authored around 30 books on politics and diplomacy as well as a number of articles for *Foreign Affairs*. He was clearly a proponent of a healthy work-life balance, as it is called today.

In many ways, Tom believes, Halle's book is still relevant. "Kids growing up today don't play outside as much as kids in the past. We all tend to stay inside more and watch TV, use the computer, or sit around with music plugged into our heads," Tom says. "Even walking down the street, many of us shut out the natural world as much as possible. We're in danger of losing touch with it."



Tom Walter (EUR), seated at far left, studies a handout with his class in Rock Creek Park. At right, instructor Kent Minichiello introduces the day's topic.

There are many reasons why staying in touch with the natural world is important. First, says Tom, because it is the real world. "Look what happens when our computers go down—we're helpless. We're dependent on everything that the hive does for us. Living in the city, we don't know where our food comes from—we just know that if there's a snowstorm, we can't get to it."

Halle would also say that the natural world is where real happiness and self-understanding comes from. "Getting out into the open world, rediscovering the solitude and examining the distance, relieves the mind from the tight pressure of the present, cleans it, refreshes it, relaxes it, and smooths it out," he writes, "and so allows it to expand and admit through its subconscious past the universal understanding for which it was shaped."

The class has not turned Tom into an expert overnight, but it has made him more aware of the natural world. He's more attuned to bird song than before, even if he can't always identify the type of bird singing. He now knows where to look for the bald eagle and can recognize the first signs of spring, such as the singing of cardinals or the skunk cabbage that blooms in late January. He's taken note of the early spring flight pattern of crows over his home in Maryland—the same phenomenon, it so happens, that was described in one of the class readings, an 1871 essay by nature writer John Burroughs. "For me, as for many city people, these things have always been in the background," Tom

explains. "But I've started to become aware of the cyclical patterns of plants and birds."

And the mysteries of nature are simply interesting to contemplate. "There are many things in nature that we take for granted," says Tom. "Some phenomena are downright strange—like the monarch butterflies that are born in Mexico and migrate to a place several thousand miles northward for the warm season, then return to exactly the same spot in Mexico. Or the warblers that migrate from Central America up to Canada every year. The big question is not just how they do it—although that's a mystery—but also why they do it."

Bottom line—there's a lot to learn and appreciate in nature, for those who are willing to get out of the hive and open their eyes. People sometimes think that they have to travel great distances to places like the Rocky Mountains or Costa Rica. But they could stay right here and see enough to last a lifetime.

"Thoreau said, 'I have traveled much in Concord,' meaning that his microcosm of the world was there in Concord, Massachusetts, and he had no need to travel anywhere else," says Tom. "Halle would say that Washington, because of its biological diversity, is even better."◆

Go back to nature

The Audubon Naturalist Society holds a variety of classes for children, adults, and families. These classes, hikes, and explorations are offered year round and range from half-day sessions to programs spanning several weeks. In addition to classes, the Society offers many other activities, such as travel programs to places like Nova Scotia, Alaska, and Brazil; teacher workshops; conservation forums; and even birthday parties for kids. For more information, please visit their website at www.audubonnaturalist.org.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School also offers, in cooperation with the Audubon Naturalist Society, a Natural History Field Studies Certificate Program on evenings and weekends. For more details, consult their website at <http://grad.usda.gov/>

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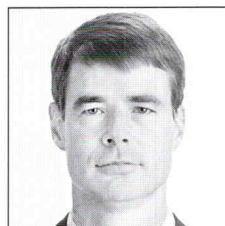
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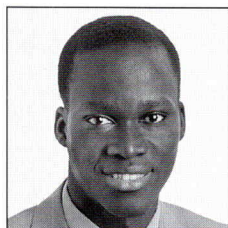
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Rozainita Shamsudin

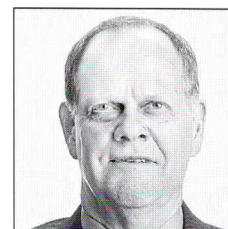
Malaysian, is an Advisor to the Executive Director, OED. Previously a manager at the economics department of Bank Negara Malaysia, she holds a B.A. (Honors) in economics from Kingston University, United Kingdom. She enjoys reading magazines and watching movies.



newimfstaff

Richard Shepherd

Australian, is a Senior Economist, STA. He holds a bachelor's of economics (Honors) from Adelaide University in Australia.



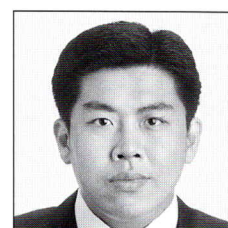
Mick Silver

British, is a Senior Economist, STA. Formerly a professor of economic statistics at Cardiff University, he holds a Ph.D. from Leeds University and lists reading, travel, and socializing among his interests.



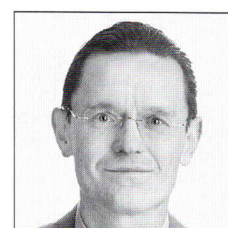
Worawut Wesaratchakit

Thai, is an Advisor to the Executive Director, OED. Previously a senior analyst with the Bank of Thailand, he holds a M.S. in econometrics from the London School of Economics. He enjoys tennis and bowling.



Mariusz Sumlinski

Polish, is a Senior Economist, MCD. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the George Washington University.



imfstaff30years

Margaret J. Earll
Shuja Nawaz

imfstaff25years

Alain Coune
E. Hull Kalantari
Neena Kapur
Philippe Marciniak
Belinda B. Ruch

imfstaff20years

Deborah A. Reilly
Alice Smith-Rodlauer

Separations

Johann R. Bjorgvinsson
Nicolas Calcoen
Jean Y. Curtis
W. Edward Henson
Maria C. Karlsson
Caroline M. Kende-Robb
Martha S. Kipnis
Youkyong Kim Kwon
Flemming Larsen
John Starrels
Benjamin Trapani, Jr.
Jacqueline R. Vanhee
John F. Wilson

Transfers

Lars Magnus Alvesson to EUR from AFR
Irene G. Aquino to TGS from APD
Ritu Basu to EUR from MFD
Jorge Canales Kriljenko to WHD from MFD
Marta Castello-Branco to MFD from EUR
Thanos Catsambas to FAD from FIN
Joshua D. Charap to MCD from AFR
Wim Fonteyne to EUR from MFD
Poonam Gupta to EUR from RES
Paul Louis C. Hilbers to EUR from MFD
Jiro Honda to AFR from FIN
Lourdes Z. Horton to STA from MFD
Dora Metodieva Iakova to EUR from APD
Christopher J. Jarvis to FIN from APD
Shanti Karunaratne to APD from EUR
Petya Yordanova Koeva to APD from EUR
Natalia A. Koliadina to EUR from PDR
Flemming Larsen to EUR from EUO

Paul James Murray to FIN from HRD
David J. Ordoobadi to FIN from ICM
Michael G. Papaioannou to ICM from WHD
Kathleen A. Phillips to EUR from HRD
Samuele Rosa to AFR from STA
Christoph B. Rosenberg to EUR from PDR
Randa El Khechen Sab to MCD from WHD
Andre Oliveira Santos to MFD from INS
Todd Turner Schneider to MCD from PDR
Manmohan Singh to MCD from ICM
George Edwin Smith III to ICM from FAD
Oral Highworth Williams to FAD from WHD
Harm Zebregs to EUR from APD
Mayra R. Zermeno Livas to MCD from WHD

IMF gives \$1 million to D.C. housing fund



L-r: In a gesture to the IMF's host city, the MD presents a \$1 million check to D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams for low-income housing here.

On March 10, IMF Managing Director Rodrigo de Rato presented D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams with a \$1 million contribution from the IMF to the D.C. Housing Production Trust Fund. The IMF's gift to the Trust Fund is the third installment in a \$2 million public amenity package associated with the zoning process for the construction of HQ2.

During a small gathering in the Mayor's office, the Managing Director expressed his appreciation for the city's programs for low-income housing. "As the IMF is increasing its presence here with the construction of its second headquarters building," he said, "I am pleased to contribute to the authorities' efforts to provide some of the District's residents with better homes and help them make a better life."

The IMF's donation comes at a time when the city's low-income housing is facing a crisis arising from a confluence of factors. Housing costs have risen steeply over the past few years, causing the supply of low-cost housing to shrink. Neighborhoods where affordable housing was once plentiful are now being gentrified, resulting in the displacement of longtime residents. And federal funds to the District—once a key source of support for low-income housing—have been cut.

The D.C. Housing Production Trust Fund works to offset these factors by preserving existing affordable housing and, where possible, creating new units. At least 40 percent of all its funds must be used to serve households with incomes below 30 percent of the area median income, which is \$25,630 for a family of four. The Trust Fund also creates housing opportunities for the homeless as well as elderly and disabled people. ♦

Gearing up for Christmas in April

It's time once again for "Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April," one of IMF Community Relations' best-known projects. On Saturday, April 30, IMF volunteers will come out bright and early to repair a house in southeast D.C.

Organizing this annual event for many years running, Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April is a nonprofit organization that works to help low-income elderly and disabled homeowners on fixed incomes maintain their homes. The nonprofit selects the homes that Fund volunteers, as well as volunteers across the nation, will repair.

The house slated for renovation this year belongs to Minnie Brown, a longtime D.C. resident who lives near St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Brown has lived in this house since 1974, raising seven of her own children and three foster children (whom she later adopted). Since her husband passed

away in 1999, she has found it increasingly difficult to maintain the house alone, so the Fund team's work will be a godsend for this warm and gentle lady.

With supplies donated by Home Depot and paint companies, Kathy DeBoe—this year's interim captain—and her team have their work cut out for them. Fund engineers have agreed to help out with the plumbing and electrical work, and Kathy's neighbor, Tony Hammond, will provide professional painting services. Semer Safi, husband of Afi Apoloo-Safi (SEC), has offered his carpentry services. And the team is ready to welcome Fund staff, families, and retiree volunteers who are willing to help out with painting, plastering, yard-work, and other light-duty tasks.

This year's Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April is dedicated to the memory of Greg Turner, who served for many years as the house captain before his untimely death last June. To volunteer for this year's project, please call Community Relations on ext. 37085 or ext. 34133.

