

August 2011  
 Number 4, Volume 1  
 Late Summer Issue



## The Central America & Caribbean Issue

ICAA/ICAP is pleased to bring you our 'Focus on Central America & the Caribbean' issue of 'The Summit', which includes news, profiles and events for and about ICAP.



*"This edition of the ICAP/ICAA newsletter focuses on the Caribbean and Central America. This region is filled with rich diversity, history, culture, arts, and very interesting socio-economic and political stories. Our ICAP family is filled with the similar richness in diversity of experiences, thoughts, backgrounds, and professional disciplines. In this newsletter, you will see interesting and insightful stories and dialogues from our ICAP community and friends. We are so blessed with your efforts and time to share with us your stories and experiences. Enjoy another great edition of this newsletter! Thank you!"*

### In the Summer Issue:

- Interview with Brioni James, ICAP '99
- Notes from the Field
- \*NEW\* Ask Maria
- Personal Reflection: Bethany Dickerson Wynder, ICAP '10
- ICAPers in the News
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- Article "Increasing National Security Knowledge" by Tony Fernandes, ICAP '00



## Remembering Opalanga



*"Opalanga was an extraordinary woman who infused a special sensitivity into the ICAP at Aspen experience. She had that unique "third eye and ear" that therapists speak of - she saw the ICAPers ambition, she heard their anxiety, and she created an atmosphere that encouraged trust and sharing. She will be missed. She is irreplaceable."*

- Maria Pinto Carland

*"Opalanga, to me, represented one of the most precious things about ICAP. She was about shedding your inhibitions, remembering your stories, and digging deep to find what you cherish, fear, and really FEEL. Opalanga's greatest gift to me was to urge me to pick a ritual, when my sister died suddenly in 2002, to both grieve and remember her by. I have my own ritual now for Opalanga."*

-Nina Segal

## Interview: Brioni James, ICAP '99

Back in 1998, I had just been promoted to Country Representative for Honduras at the Inter-American Foundation. My supervisor at the time who was very supportive of my professional development encouraged me to apply to the ICAP program. I did apply with a very strong recommendation from him and was accepted. Not knowing what to expect, my trip to ASPEN was nerve racking. I arrived in the evening, just in time for the welcome reception. At the entrance, the first person I met was Emita Williams, *una compatriota*, also from Panama. Emita was extremely welcoming and introduced me to Tom, Ambassador Edward Perkins and others. I met several of my colleagues and the previous year cohort representative Florence Zake. That same night, we stayed pretty late chatting and getting to know each other. It was a MAGICAL evening!! Never before had I felt so much at home with so many people I had just met; I actually felt that I belonged.

I was born and raised in Panama, moved to the US to finish my last year in high school at the age of 16, lived with my oldest sister and her family whom I had only met once when I was 10 years old (because she had left Panama when I was 6 months old) attended college in Washington State, transferred to Wisconsin where I married my Yoruba ex-husband, and completed graduate school.

During my college years, I discovered the multi-cultural aspect of American society. I learned about the Anglo and American Indian traditions of the Northwest, I learned about the inner-city African American and Hispanic communities of Milwaukee and Chicago, and was privileged to learn and build lasting friendships within a small Middle Eastern community. Over the years, I have come to recognize that my career path has been driven primarily by two things - my passion to learn and enjoy the variety of cultures and the opportunity to make a

difference in people's lives. When I think back to my first night in Aspen with my '99 ICAP colleagues, I now know that one of the reasons I felt so much at home was because we all share these same values. While the purpose of ICAP is to facilitate a path for people of color to reach their full potential in the International field, what makes this group so special is the drive



Brioni at Nicaragua's Masaya Volcano

that we all have to be change agents for a better world for all. So, ICAP '99 not only introduced me to life-long friends and amazing mentors, but reaffirmed my commitment to giving a voice to the marginalized. But not just that, on the second day of sessions something clicked, the stimulating discussions and positive reinforcement validated me as a smart, strong willed, and capable individual to accomplish anything I was set out to accomplish. Since then and with the support of the ICAP community, I have followed a career in International Development that has been and continues to be exciting and very rewarding.

Since ICAP, I left my job at the Inter-American Foundation, worked for Peace Corps in Washington and overseas as Deputy Country Director for 8 years, went to work for USAID's LAC Bureau, and converted to the Foreign Service. My first assignment as a Democracy and Governance (DG) Officer was to the USAID Mis-

sion in Honduras where I served as Deputy Director to the DG Office for one year and 2 months ago was promoted to Office Director. During my 4-year tour here in Honduras, I hope to not only strengthen Democratic Governance and the respect for Rule of Law, but hope to develop and implement a strategy for ensuring that our programs target vulnerable populations such as women, indigenous and Afro-Hondurans, and persons with disabilities.

Central America, primarily the northern-triangle countries i.e. Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, are not only suffering as result of inequalities, low levels of education, high-unemployment, and poor health, but are specially burden by high crime rates consequence of increasing narco-trafficking and gang activity. In addition to this challenge, Honduras' democracy was challenged in 2009 with a coup d'état where Presiden Zelaya was removed when the military took him from his home in pajamas to Costa Rica. Since then, an interim government was put in place and civil liberties and a high number of human right violations were committed by the military and civilian police. Since the coup d'état, we have been experiencing a society that is highly polarized and where the political landscape is forever in turmoil. During the last few months, Honduras was finally readmitted to the OAS, ex-President Zelaya returned to the country, the Truth Commission released its report revealing the events that lead to the coup d'état and made a series of recommendations that if implemented would provide Honduras with a legal framework that would allow them to remove a president through *impeachment* rather than a military coup d'état.

*Continued on Page 5 ...*



## Notes from the field ...

### Earl Carr, ICAP '05

Vice President - International Banking | HSBC Bank (Taiwan) Ltd

"After 4 years living in China me, my wife Johanna and our 2 little ones (Francis & Mia) spent about 3 weeks packing up everything and then relocated to our new home based in the beautiful city of Taipei, approximately 422 miles away from Shanghai. Johanna & I have enjoyed exploring this fascinating city together and we love our new home! Francis and Mia are adjusting well to their new room, surroundings, and toys!"

*"If you got married or had a new edition to your family please let us know so that we can include this info in the newsletter. Send those cute wedding or baby photos!"*

*Atim Eneida George, ICAP '97* named as U.S. Public Diplomat in Residence 2011-2012, USC Center on Public Diplomacy  
"I just wanted to take this opportunity to let you know of my onward assignment as Visiting Fellow and Public Diplomat at the University of Southern California's Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD). This assignment, likely my last in the U.S. Foreign Service, is everything I asked for; to work with our young people in an academic setting, on PD issues in a warm climate. The fact that our ICAP colleague Ernie Wilson is Dean of the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism makes this opportunity all the more thrilling. As you can see, I proudly acknowledge my ICAP affiliation."

## Ask Maria



Maria Pinto Carland has graciously agreed to answer your most pressing career questions...

**Question:** *Although I am successful in my current career, I would like to make a change to pursue something different in a different sector that is closer to my heart, but that would mean starting over again or going back to school, especially in this uncertain economy how should I approach developing my game plan?*

Maria: Many ICAPers are at a stage where dreams of career change are both appealing and natural. Pursuing a dream involves risk, but avoiding risk leaves you with the question: "What if?" Instead, ask some different questions, now – of yourself and others...

First, assess your skills, knowledge and experience. Which among them might apply to the new field? What would you need to learn or do before entering that field?

If you start over in a new field, how difficult or easy will it be to obtain a post? Will your current skills be valued? Given your age and experience, could you be hired at an entry level? Would you be willing to start at the bottom in terms of salary and status? Is this new field well placed in the current economy? Can regular promotions be expected?

If you return to school – could you keep your current position, and take night classes? Could you enroll full time? Can you afford tuition or are scholarships available? Would you have to move? How long does it take to complete a degree? Can you wait that long? Visit schools and inquire about their offerings of financial assistance, courses, counseling and placement.

Then, speak with professionals in the sector you hope to join. Remember, since you are already successful in your current career, people will give serious consideration to your potential in another one. Information interviews raise your profile, and sharpen your image in their eyes. How did they enter the field? What do they like most/least about it? What skills did they bring? What skills are necessary today? Which are the top companies? Who could they introduce you to there? How can you make your resume address your new interests?

*Continued on Page 9 ...*

### *I Ran to Greet the Morning*

I ran to greet the morning  
something propelled me  
pulled me  
drove me  
to kiss sunrise  
with wide open soul  
Ran  
with swift feet  
to greet the morning.  
the purity in that  
moment  
drove me to  
contemplate.  
God met me  
at the morning  
in my purest essence  
stripped down  
facing the mountains.  
And I kissed the sunshine.

*Rana Dotson, ICAP '10*





## ICAP Community Board



### Congratulations!

ICAP would like to Congratulate **James Mejia, ICAP Alumnus** for his valiant run for Mayor of Denver, Colorado! "I am optimistic about our future. I know that our team has affected the direction of Denver's next steps and we may continue to play a role. I want to ensure that our ideas about moving Denver forward continue to be discussed."

Dear ICAPers,

I wanted to let you know that I have decided to expand my scope of work a bit now that my children are older, and start taking on individual private clients for 1:1 career counseling sessions, including resume and interview preparation, career change, and broader career development discussions. I am still limiting my scope of work to the international public service arena. I am also working with a few additional organizational clients, beyond the UN, in the area of career development and transition. Thus, I would simply appreciate it if you'd keep me in mind in case you have friends, colleagues, or managers that are seeking counsel on these issues. Obviously, NY based clients are easiest, but I have been doing some phone/email work as well and can easily get to Washington if an agency or non-profit is interested and willing. - Nina Segal

Nina can be reached at [nswk1@verizon.net](mailto:nswk1@verizon.net)

*On Wednesday, November 24th, 2010, Desmond Saunders-Newton left this world. His children, Mounir and Ayiana lost their beloved father. We lost a son, a brother, a husband and a friend with a brilliant mind, a warm heart and a contagious smile. Desmond was passionate about education, and felt it was paramount to his children's success as adults that they should be continually learning. To this end, an education fund for Mounir and Ayiana was established so that Desmond's dream can live on. May they dream big dreams! You may still make a donation at the following web site <http://www.saundersnewtonfund.org>*



## Notes from the field ...

### *Latanya Mapp Frett, ICAP '01*

"I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you for making the ICAP network really work. I too am moving on to Planned Parenthood as Vice President heading up the International Division based in New York. I first saw the announcement on AWID Resource-Net...thanks Sylvia :)

After 17 years overseas, 8 with USAID, 6 with the UN, and Peace Corps. this is a wonderful transition for me to come back home and do work for women around the world. I look forward to working closer with many of you as I seek out broader development partnerships in reproductive health and women's rights. "

### *Rod Miller, ICAP '05*

"I hope that all of you are well. I'm just writing to inform you that I'll be starting my new post as President and CEO of the New Orleans Business Alliance next month. The Alliance is a public-private partnership that has essentially pulled the economic development responsibility from the city and placed in this new entity. I will be the initial CEO. The challenges of building New Orleans' economy are tremendous and I'll definitely need lots of help. I'm certain that I'll be tapping the ICAP network frequently and appreciate all the support that you have given me over the years."

### *Bama Athreya, ICAP '01*

After thirteen very rewarding years, *Bama Athreya* will move on from the executive leadership of the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF). "I am truly delighted to report that as of this month, I have joined forces with my friend and colleague Claude Fontheim at his DC-based consulting firm, Fontheim International. Claude and his team have invited me to lead a nonprofit advocacy organization launched as a pro bono project of the firm, the Global Works Foundation." Global Works' mission is to end global poverty, and drawing on the expertise and connections of firm, it seeks to do so by influencing US bilateral and multilateral public policy, in particular through its flagship program, the Trade, Aid and Security Coalition.

### *Interview: Brioni James, Continued*

Addressing this challenge, the US Government and International Donors, have made a commitment to working with the Government of Honduras and civil society to renew citizen's trust in Democracy, reduce crime rates, increase transparency by attaching corruption, and alleviating poverty. USAID Honduras to this end, is implementing programs in food security through the Feed the Future Presidential Initiative, its programs in health, nutrition, and HIV/AIDS are targeting the decentralization of health services and improvement in health indicators, the Education sector still supporting improvements in the curriculum and teaching methods along with strengthening citizens involvement in the education sector at the local level. The Democracy and Governance program is supporting democratic governance across sectors by strengthening the decentralization of public services at the municipal level, promoting transparency and citizen involvement through social audits of national level government institutions and local governments, assisting the Electoral Tribunal to ensure free and fair elections in 2012 and 2013, and implementing a cross-sectorial strategy aimed at reducing crime as part of the Central American Regional Security Presidential Initiative.

While my first assignment has been to Central America, I am looking forward to future assignments in other parts of the world.

Having worked in Honduras before certainly allowed me to jump in and get involved in the DG program right away. I am excited at the opportunity to lead the DG Office in implementing our challenging 5-year strategy and to truly make a difference in Honduras and among marginalized communities. Also look forward to be able to take what I have learned here to contribute to DG programs in Asia and Africa.

In responding to the question about what makes me special, Maria Carland comes to mind. Our mentor that we all love so much, Maria Carland, told me a long time ago. "Brioni, you are fantastic at working quietly behind the scenes while achieving greatness." Friends, that is exactly who I am. What makes me special is to be able to find positive qualities in others and figure out a way to strengthen their skills and abilities so as to empower them to make a difference. I am an educator and mentor at heart. I play this role with my staff, my friends, and certainly with my family. In addition to empowering others, over the years I have become a very good strategist. I am good at seeing the big picture and developing successful strategies that achieve results. This is one skill that has allowed me to succeed professionally.

A word of advice to our upcoming new ICAP colleagues, do not take ICAP for granted. Being accepted into the ICAP family, grants you access to amazing and caring individuals.

We are, for the most part, willing to bend over backwards ....several times for our ICAP colleagues.

We can serve as a sounding board, we are excellent at giving each other advise, leads, and introducing to key individuals, however, it is important to cherish and respect each other. Give back and duplicate outside of ICAP what ICAP has given you. There are so many friends that for years have applied to the ICAP program yet have not being accepted. You can give back by supporting the ICAP program so that it continues to exist not only for us but for others, but also by mentoring other professional of color that have not been accepted into the program.

*Brioni with family, Tamara & Howard*



### *Notes from the field ...*

*Aysba House Moshi, ICAP '10*

"After 10 long years on the Hill, I have made an exciting leap over to USAID, working as the Congressional Liaison Officer for Feed the Future. Feed the Future (FtF) is the Administration's initiative to reduce global hunger and build sustained agricultural-led growth. I hope to work with you all to end global hunger and ensure food security for all people."

\*If you ever need to get information fast on any work USAID is doing, I'm happy to find the right person to get you the right answers.



## ICAPers in the News

▶ ICAPers Harold Scott, C.D. Glin and Kali Jones were featured in the Summer 2011 edition of the *Howard University Magazine*. It features HBCU grads and ICAP alums. This is a pretty amazing issue on service in the international arena- inspiring content and a familiar face on the cover.

▶ Fellow ICAPER '06 Carmencita "Wonderwoman" Whonder is on page 69 of the June issue of *Washingtonian Magazine*, as one of the featured young and upcoming lobbyists.

▶ Click on the Link to view Mehlika Hoodbhoy's (ICAP '00) featured recipe on *Alan Divack's Food Blog*.

<http://alandivack.blogspot.com/2011/04/micas-chickpeas.html>

### "Mica's chickpeas"

*Mica Hoodbhoy is 50% Turkish, 50% Pakistani, but 100% gastronome. She is one of the people, and they are relatively few (no offense intended to the rest of you), whose taste in food I really respect."*

▶ Read about Eric Henderson's, (ICAP '00) examination of Africa and the western approach to Africa in the context of Art and an NYC institution, continuing the series he is writing on "Art, The Arts, and Policy" for the *Huffington Post* at

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/eric-j-henderson/museum-of-african-art\\_b\\_909005.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/eric-j-henderson/museum-of-african-art_b_909005.html)

Eric has also been named to head a component of a nine-country, six-year project, kicking off in NYC... It's a collaboration between BMW and the Guggenheim: <http://www.bmwguggenheimlab.org>

▶ Please see the link to Curtis Valentine's (ICAP '09) latest *Huffington Post* piece entitled, "Winning the Future: Can Americans Put their Passions to Work?" [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/curtis-valentine/winning-the-future-can-am\\_b\\_814979.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/curtis-valentine/winning-the-future-can-am_b_814979.html)

▶ Click on the link to view the *White House Profile on C.D.Glin: Champion of Change* <http://www.whitehouse.gov/champions/peace-corps/cd-glin>



▶ **Meet CLEO Alum, (and ICAP Newsletter Editor) Cuong Quy Huynh** featured on the CLEO website.

The Council on Legal Education Opportunity's (CLEO) *diverCITY Network (CDN)* exists solely to increase the number of practicing minority attorneys by further advancing the cause and importance of diversity on myriad levels within the legal community.

"CLEO Alum, **Cuong Huynh**, works for the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** as a policy analyst and is a former NASA Presidential Management Fellow. Along with his policy and budget work, Cuong is a Socrates Scholar at the Aspen Institute where he learned about, among other things, energy, immigration, and climate change. Additionally, he is starting an educational initiative to help low-income and immigrant children to build leadership skills and to focus on math and science disciplines.

In 2006, Cuong graduated from the prestigious **International Career Advancement Program (ICAP)** and in 2004, he worked as a Legislative Fellow for the **U.S. Senate Committee on Finance**, where he specialized in international trade and tax issues, with particular emphasis on matters relating to China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Cuong received his JD from **UC-Hastings Law School**. He attended the 2000 Six-Week Summer Institute at **Suffolk University School of Law** in Boston, MA. Cuong thanks CLEO for helping him get selected as an ABA Business Law Scholarship winner during his 1L year at Hastings. Cuong earned a master's in public policy from the **University of Chicago** and a bachelor's in Sociology from **UCLA**. He is currently an Ambassador to the **Heart of Foundation**, a non-profit organization that promotes literacy and education for low-income children in the United States. "

## Personal Reflection: An ICAP Experience

By Bethany Dickerson Wynder, ICAP '10

Someone once told me that a dream without a task is an illusion. A task without a dream is drudgery. One's goal should be to work to couple the dream with the right task. A dream of mine over the past few years has been to broaden my horizons and expand my network in the international arena and deepen my professional relationships with talented and dynamic individuals, who are committed to ensuring greater educational, leadership development, and service learning opportunities for others. Given the changing terrain, rapid expansion of global institutions in the public and private sectors, and global competition, the right task for me has become better equipping myself and other emerging leaders from marginalized communities to identify tactics and actions that as a group we can employ to advance as a community.

My ICAP learning experience was a powerful and enriching one, in part, because I arrived in Aspen open to giving and receiving the gifts of knowledge, camaraderie among kindred spirits, and unconditional support. The

fact that ICAP is held in Aspen, Colorado is no coincidence. Aspen is often described as a "place to exercise your mind, body, and spirit" and that captures some of the essence of my ICAP experience. Highlights of my ICAP 2010 experience included a thought-provoking presentation by Desmond Saunders-Newton (ICAP 1997), "Are We There Yet? Impetuous Questions in a Post-Racial World" and the powerful spiritual "Ceremonial Beginning" led by Tink Tinker. High-impact sessions included, "Diversity, Leadership and Current Environments," "Career Workshop: Creating an Effective Network," "Career Workshop: Strategies for Career Advancement," "Reflections on the Public and Private Sectors," "Individual Career Advising," and lectures that addressed and analyzed policy challenges in various regions around the world.

Opportunities for interaction with participants and introspection during ICAP facilitated my transition to a new and challenging job in January 2011. I am the Director of Diversity Recruitment Initiatives at City Year

([www.cityyear.org](http://www.cityyear.org)), a national youth service organization that deploys nearly 2,000 young adults each year, in teams, to serve as tutors, mentors, and role models in high-need public schools in 21 U.S. cities. Many of my responsibilities include creating a multi-year business plan to further increase the diversity of corps members and building and sustaining national partnerships with organizations that possess the will and capacity to partner around offering young adults powerful service opportunities and building the urban graduation pipeline. In part, because of my ICAP experience, I have been able to more quickly add value to the work of City Year and work with colleagues to further increase educational, leadership development, and service learning opportunities for talented youth and young adults from diverse groups. Continued interactions with my peer group have been rewarding and meaningful.

The ICAP community is like the extensive root system that enables thousands of individual Aspen trees, like those that grace the mountains of Aspen, Colorado, to survive and thrive in often harsh environments, in that they enable individuals, regardless of their



**The ICAP community is like the extensive root system that enables thousands of individual Aspen trees to survive and thrive.**

background to be in communion with others who understand that no matter the external environment, our internal connections as members of the ICAP community will strengthen and sustain us along our journeys.

## Grand Central

*Have you relocated? drop us a line and tell us where you are! We need to be able to connect with each other and take advantage of our vast ICAP network*



**ICAP**  
INTERNATIONAL CAREER  
ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM  
Aspen, Colorado

## *“Outstanding Opportunity to Increase National Security Knowledge and Expand Contacts” by Tony Fernandes, ICAP ‘00*

I attended the two-week National Security Management Course on the campus of Syracuse University at the Maxwell School for National Security Studies from April 25 to May 6, 2011. I was one of two State Department selected and funded participants in the course. The focus of the Course was “New Threats - New Thinking.” The curriculum included everything from issues involving intelligence, terrorism/counterterrorism, foreign policy, management, leadership, homeland security, global economics, and trouble spots around the world to an array of current challenges facing the nation. The goal of the program was to address lessons of history and issues of contemporary relevance to national security.

I highly recommend the course to ICAPers. It was a great opportunity to engage high-level speakers and participants on the most pressing national security issues facing the U.S. and the global community. My 51 classmates represented several U.S. government agencies, the Department of Defense, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, U.S. Government Accountability Office, private companies and two countries – Holland and the United Arab Emirates. In this dynamic, not-for-attribution setting we had great conversations on a whole host of issues. I learned as much from my classmates as I did from the various speakers. There were also numerous hands-on exercises that stimulated interaction. Participants were at the minimum ranks of 06/GS15/FS-1, as well as Flag and General Officers, SEs, and non-defense equivalent status. My classmates were warm, friendly, open to my opinions

and people I will definitely stay in touch with. Most impressive was their dedication to their work. One of my classmates is a current female astronaut and on her own time presented a short home video of her last space shuttle mission in space.

Among the speakers were Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General James Cartwright, former NBC News Foreign Correspondent Fred Francis, NBC News Analyst Retired General Barry McCaffrey, Deputy



Secretary of State Bill Burns, National Correspondent for the Atlantic Magazine James Fallows and Deputy Director of the CIA Michael Morrell.

We also had four book signings with Washington Bureau Chief of the New York Daily News Tom DeFrank, Former Commander of Joint Task Force for Hurricane Katrina General Russel Honore, Director of Middle East Peace Process at the Washington Institute David Makovsky, and CNN National Security Analysts Peter Bergen.

Unfortunately very few of the participants represented the great diversity the ICAP community fosters. I strongly encourage ICAPers to apply and participate. Because

the course is not free, I suggest you contact your agency or organization to support your tuition and application.

For more info visit the web-site at [www.nss.edu](http://www.nss.edu) and contact Director Bill Smullen at: [bsmullen@maxwell.syr.edu](mailto:bsmullen@maxwell.syr.edu), 315-443-7099 or Administrative Supervisor Sue Virgil at: [smvirgil@maxwell.syr.edu](mailto:smvirgil@maxwell.syr.edu), 315-443-9920. The dates for the 2012 NSMC are April 22 to May 4. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

*Tony Fernandes was chosen by the State Department to attend the National Security Management Course at the Maxwell School of Citizenship Public Affairs at Syracuse University. This year's course focused on "New Threats, New Thinking" and explored the wide range of emerging management challenges facing domestic and international security professionals.*

*He was also featured by the State Department in celebration of Black History Month and other months in support of Hispanics, Asians and others on the web page.*

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/pix/blackhistory/2011/155554.htm>



### *Notes from the field ...*

#### *Mathew Woodlee, ICAP 2009*

“I accepted a position with the International Trade Administration/U.S. Commercial Service in Minneapolis, MN in late 2010. I'm now serving as a Senior International Trade Specialist where I provide consulting and advise to U.S. companies on expanding sales internationally. The U.S. Commercial Service helps U.S. companies enter foreign markets by providing trade consulting, market intelligence, business matchmaking and commercial advocacy.



## Ask Maria

*Continued from Page 3...*

All these questions will provide advice and insight, and will also expand your knowledge of the field. But remember, it's not only about what you've learned, but how you feel about this new knowledge. You need to decide whether a new career is still of interest, and if so, whether you have what it takes, or can learn what it takes, to succeed.

Having worked through these steps, you can be confident that you can make a well-informed decision that is right for you - because it's logical and because it speaks to your heart.



**Question:** *There is a great work opportunity in a country where I have always wanted to live, which would do wonders for my career and family bank account. The move there will be disruptive to my family, especially for my younger children who are in middle school. How should I weigh the pros and cons for myself and my family?*

A great opportunity always has pros and cons, and you're wise to review them before coming to a decision. In the larger sense, your family should know why this is important to you. Moreover, your children should have as much information as possible, and an opportunity to share their opinions and concerns with you. Then you should consider the following topics and questions which speak to your family's future comfort and happiness:

### Spouse

- ◆Does your spouse see this opportunity as a positive one? ◆If s/he works is a transfer or other employment in Country X possible?
- ◆Will the move derail or damage his/her career? ◆Can you and your spouse find affordable help for the house and children?

### Financial situation

- ◆Can you rent/sell your house here without a financial loss, given the economy? ◆What is the living standard in Country X? Will you be paid in \$ or local currency ◆Will you find affordable, comfortable housing? ◆What are the employment benefits? – medical coverage? vacations? promotions? pensions? ◆Can you return to the States with this company, or need to job hunt when you return?

### Security and Living Conditions

- ◆What is the security situation? Are there risks to living in Country X? ◆Do you prefer a rural or urban community, and will you be able to choose? ◆Will you and/or your wife and children require a car? ◆How will you and your family commute to work and school?

### Adaptability

- ◆Will you and your family find it difficult to adapt to local food, dress, and customs? ◆Does your family know the Country X language? ◆If not, are classes available before you leave? Can they learn it without too much difficulty?

### Education

- ◆If the children are in Middle School, will they be ready for High School when you leave? (a new school in the US or in Country X will mean new buildings, teachers, and classmates) ◆Is your choice of schooling – public, private, boarding - available in Country X?
- ◆Is there an American accredited school available? ◆Will the children have access to new and different sports and entertainment?

While taking your children's concerns into account, your own and your spouse's judgment, experience, and sense of responsibility should be the major determinants in the final decision. Children can be resistant to change in their lives, but they are also very resilient and adaptable, particularly when they are shown the affection and attention of loving parents. Whatever you decide, if you have considered all of the above, you can be confident that you have made a decision with which you and your family can be fully comfortable.





Editor: Cuong Huynh, ICAP '06



Editing, Layout & Design:  
Chai Floore, ICAP '07, visiting  
the Royal Palace in Bangkok,  
Thailand.



Editor-at-Large: Pui Man Wong, ICAP '08, Working and hav-  
ing fun at Siem Reap, Cambodia with fellow ICAPer V. Kate  
Somvongsiri.



**ICAP**  
INTERNATIONAL CAREER  
ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM  
*Aspen, Colorado*

## *Get Involved with the Newsletter!*

**WE NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION TO CONTINUE TO MAKE THE SUMMIT A SUCCESS!**

Be our next 'Where in the World' Contributor, Write and Article about a profes-  
sional development event you attended! If you are interested in being involved in  
the production of the newsletter or contributing articles please send an e-mail to us.

Submissions: Please submit information, articles and photos to the following e-mail  
address: [icap.summit@hotmail.com](mailto:icap.summit@hotmail.com) and please copy [cghuynh72@hotmail.com](mailto:cghuynh72@hotmail.com)