



THURSDAY LUNCHEON GROUP
GOLDEN JUBILEE ANNIVERSARY
1973-2023



Thursday Luncheon Group
Celebrating 50 years of excellence in foreign affairs

Thursday Luncheon Group History

**2022-24 Thursday Luncheon Group
Executive Board & Liaisons**

The Thursday Luncheon Group, or TLG, is the Department of State’s oldest employee organization founded in 1973 to increase the participation of African Americans in the formulation, articulation, and implementation of U.S. foreign policy. TLG supports and empowers its diverse membership network through targeted outreach and programming designed to support retention, as well as promote the inclusion of African American perspectives and policy expertise in foreign affairs. Membership is open to all employees and retirees of foreign affairs agencies.

TLG was founded when African-American participation in the foreign affairs agencies increased dramatically. In 1973, two senior former USIA officers, William B. Davis and Roburt A. Dumas, urged their friends at USIA, State, and USAID to consider what they could do to encourage more significant roles for African-Americans in foreign affairs. Early supporters of TLG included Ambassadors O. Rudolph Aggrey, Barbara Watson, Donald McHenry, Terence A. Todman and Edward Perkins. An organization within USAID known as the AID Black Caucus, lobbied for improved assignments and more promotions for African Americans within USAID; it later merged with TLG.

The TLG 50th anniversary luncheon program includes the announcement of the 2023 TLG Pioneer awardees, and celebrates the contributions of treasured members, friends, and partners. TLG is proud to serve the foreign affairs community as outlined in the 2022-2024 action plan to explore new partnerships and programming, as well as modernize outreach platforms and highlight TLG predecessors’ contributions.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
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|---|-----------------|
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| Stacy Williams | Rachel Okunubi |
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| Tyra Beaman | Kidwana Frazier |
| Deneyse Kilpatrick | Geoff Moore |
| Danetra Conaway | |
| Abbie Ferguson, <i>Larry Palmer Envoy</i> | |
| Ghaida Ahmad, <i>former TLG/ABAA intern</i> | |

The Quantico Marine Corps Brass Quintet

SSgt Richard A. Berninger – Trombone
Sgt Jerry T Hanak – Tuba
Cpl Kayla E Graham – Trumpet
Cpl John T Tester – Horn
LCpl Jerilyn A Floresespinoza – Trumpet

The Thursday Luncheon Group extends a special thanks to all the event volunteers, the Quantico Marine Corps Brass Quintet, JPR Create, LLC & Windows Catering.

*2023 Thursday Luncheon Group Pioneer Award
Ambassador Pamela E. Bridgewater (ret.)*



Ambassador Pamela E. Bridgewater has enjoyed a celebrated career as a United States Foreign Service Officer who has led diplomatic efforts that helped change the course of world events. She retired from active duty in November 2013 with the rank of Career Minister after 34 years. Ambassador Bridgewater's overseas tours were in Belgium, The Bahamas, Jamaica, South Africa, Benin and Ghana. She served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and held other domestic assignments in the Department of State, including in the Office of Inspector General and at the National Defense University. She was the first African American woman to serve as Principal Officer in Durban, South Africa (1993-96), during a period of unprecedented violence in the runup to the first non-racial elections. She has the distinction of being the longest-serving U.S. diplomat in South Africa during the transition from apartheid to a non-racial government (1990-96).

At the height of the most recent civil war in Liberia, Ambassador Bridgewater was named the Department of State’s Special Coordinator for Peace in Liberia and spearheaded the efforts that led to a comprehensive peace agreement and democratic elections. Her extraordinary accomplishments and leadership abilities led President Bill Clinton to name her U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Benin; President George W. Bush to name her U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana, and President Barack Obama named her as Ambassador to Jamaica. Ambassador Bridgewater is a former Thursday Luncheon Group President and the president of the 42nd Senior Seminar.

Before joining the diplomatic corps, Ambassador Bridgewater was a university professor at Morgan State University and Bowie State University in Maryland, and Voorhees College in South Carolina. There is a consistent theme that appears throughout Ambassador Bridgewater’s professional life, and that is her role as both mediator and mentor. A tireless public servant, Ambassador Bridgewater has won numerous commendations for her contributions to international affairs and public policy, including U.S. Presidential Meritorious Service Awards, the Charles Cobb Award for Trade Promotion, Department of State Superior Honor Awards, the Secretary of State’s Career Achievement Award and the Secretary of State’s Distinguished Service Award.

She serves on several boards, including The American Friends of Jamaica, the Sanmerna Foundation (Jamaica), the Songhai Center (Benin), The Africa Society, is a member of the president of the University of Mary Washington’s Advisory Board on Diversity and is a member of the Board of Duke University Divinity School. In December 2015, Ambassador Bridgewater was named CEO and Chairman of the Board of The Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa, a Washington, D.C. based non-profit/non-partisan NGO which educates Americans, especially young people, about the African continent and served until September 2020. She wrote the introduction to the recently published Africa Society book United States and Africa Relations: The Obama Presidency, which chronicles the engagement of President Obama’s administration in Africa. She is the president of Bridge Works management consultants and is currently completing her memoir.

A PAGE FROM OUR HISTORY

Thursday Luncheon Group Membership Roster as of August 2, 1973

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Rudolph Aggrey</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>George Knox</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Claudia E. Anyaso</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>Robert B. Lane</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Norman Ashton</i> | <i>USAID</i> | <i>Thomas Orum</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>William W. Bennett</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>James Parker</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Theodore Brown</i> | <i>USAID</i> | <i>Edward J. Perkins</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Johnnie Carson</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>Frederick D. Pollard</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Jessie Colson</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>James M. Pope</i> | <i>USIA</i> |
| <i>Jacques Cook</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>William Powell</i> | <i>USIA</i> |
| <i>William B. Davis</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>Samuel President</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Horace G. Dawson, Jr.</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>Howard T. Robinson</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Richard Dey</i> | <i>USAID</i> | <i>Cora Russ</i> | <i>USIA</i> |
| <i>Janet Hall Diggs</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>Charles Sadler</i> | <i>USAID</i> |
| <i>Robert A. Dumas</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>James A. Smith</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Harriet L. Elam</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>David L. Stratmon, Sr.</i> | <i>USIA</i> |
| <i>Ollie B. Ellison</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>Lucille Thomas</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Amb. C. Clyde Ferguson</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>John C. Twitty</i> | <i>USIA</i> |
| <i>Marton C. Forrester</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>James R. Washington</i> | <i>USAID</i> |
| <i>Richard K. Fox, Jr.</i> | <i>STATE</i> | <i>Barbara Watson</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>William Gordon</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>Wilbur L. Wright</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>John W. Gravely</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>Edward L. Williams</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>George W. Haley</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>Lawrence Williams</i> | <i>USIA</i> |
| <i>William E. Jones</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>Irving Williamson</i> | <i>STATE</i> |
| <i>Stepney C. Kibble</i> | <i>USIA</i> | <i>Clarence S. Wilson, Jr.</i> | <i>STATE</i> |

PAST PRESIDENTS OF TLG

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Wilbert C. Petty</i> | <i>Ambassador Ruth A. Davis</i> |
| <i>Samuel R. President</i> | <i>Ambassador Aurelia Brazeal</i> |
| <i>James R. Washington</i> | <i>Ambassador June Carter Perry</i> |
| <i>James A. Parker</i> | <i>Ambassador Teddy Taylor</i> |
| <i>George Sealey</i> | <i>Ambassador Steven McGann</i> |
| <i>James D. Singletary</i> | <i>Ambassador Denise Mathieu</i> |
| <i>Virginia H. Butler</i> | <i>Ambassador Larry Palmer</i> |
| <i>Viessa R. Jackson</i> | <i>Ambassador Pamela Bridgewater</i> |
| <i>Robert A. Dumas, Sr.</i> | <i>Stacy D. Williams</i> |
| <i>Hartford T. Jennings</i> | <i>Recardo Gibson</i> |
| <i>Charles Hughes, Jr.</i> | <i>Irvin Hicks, Jr.</i> |
| <i>Fannie Allen</i> | |

***Bold** Denotes Civil Service Officers*



Thursday, February 2, 2023

On behalf of the Thursday Luncheon Group (TLG) executive board, welcome to the TLG 50th anniversary luncheon! We are proud to welcome Civil and Foreign Service colleagues, members of our sister foreign affairs agencies, public and private sector representatives, students, and friends to our celebration today!

Fifty years ago, a small group of colleagues across the interagency met to increase the participation of African Americans in the formulation, articulation, and implementation of United States foreign policy. That small group of dedicated diplomats has grown to an organization of more than 500 members. We acknowledge with profound thanks the vision and perseverance of our founding members, our Pioneer Awardees, and executive boards.

Throughout our jubilee anniversary we will honor our predecessors' contributions, foster stronger linkages between and among the foreign affairs agencies' employees, and promote professional development, mentoring, and fellowship opportunities. As we modernize our virtual and social media presence we will increase outreach to State Department recruits, interns, and fellows to increase membership and establish volunteer committees in support of our strategic goals.

Let our rejoicing rise,

Yolonda Kerney

Yolonda Kerney
TLG President 2022-2024

***2023 Thursday Luncheon Group Pioneer Award
Ambassador C. Steven McGann (ret.)***



Ambassador C. Steven McGann (ret) is the founder of The Stevenson Group, a consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. that identifies opportunities in the defense/security sector and implements specialized advisory services which focus on strengthening public-private partnerships.

Ambassador McGann served more than 37 years in the Foreign Service. Ambassador McGann, a retired Senior Foreign Service Officer with the rank of Minister-Counselor, was Ambassador to the Republics of Fiji, Nauru, Kiribati, and the Kingdom of Tonga and Tuvalu. Ambassador McGann also was assigned as Chief of Mission (ad interim) of the United States Embassy in Dili, Timor-Leste. He previously was the Deputy Commandant and International Affairs Adviser of the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy at the

National Defense University (NDU). McGann also served as the Vice Chancellor, College of International Security Affairs at NDU.

Ambassador McGann is a member of the Board of Trustees at Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, CA. McGann has a B.A. in political science from Claremont Men's College and pursued graduate studies in comparative government at Cornell University. Ambassador McGann was nominated to the Board of Visitors of the Army War College, Carlisle, PA. He earned an M.S. from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and is a graduate of the Naval War College Joint Force Maritime Combatant Commander Course. McGann also is an affiliate of the Center for Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Studies, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University.

Ambassador McGann serves as the current president of the Association of Black American Ambassadors (ABAA). He also serves on the boards of the Women's Refugee Commission, (WRC), the United Nations Association-National Capital Area (UNA-NCA), the American College of National Security Leaders, and the Diplomats and Consular Officers Retired (DACOR). He is a member of the advisory councils of The Una Chapman Cox Foundation, Our Secure Future (OSF) a WPS advocacy group, and several foreign affairs organizations that address diversity and gender equity.

TLG PIONEERS

Ambassador Harriet Elam-Thomas
State Department

Alonzo L. Fulgham
USAID

James “Jim” Dandridge II
State Department

Madeline Williams
State Department

Ambassador Larry Leon Palmer, Ed. D.
State Department

Ambassador Harry K. Thomas
State Department

Ms. Fannie Allen
State Department

Dr. E. Thomas Rowe
University of Denver

Dr. Richard Hope
State Department

Ambassador Joyce A. Barr
State Department

Ambassador Teddy B. Taylor
State Department

Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield
State Department

Thomas R. Nides
State Department

Career Ambassador Ruth A. Davis
State Department

Secretary Condoleezza Rice
State Department

Ambassador Horace Dawson
State Department

Ambassador Edward J. Perkins
State Department

Ms. Cheryl Hodge
State Department

Ambassador Mosina H. Jordan
USAID

Mr. Harry Lightfoot
USAID

Ambassador Ronald Palmer
State Department

Ms. Janice S. Clements
State Department

Ambassador Terence A. Todman
State Department

Dr. John L. Withers, Sr.
USAID

Mr. Charles Marshall Hanson
State Department

Ambassador Aurelia E. Brazeal
State Department

Dr. Esther P. Roberts
State Department

Mr. Paul M. Washington
State Department

Mr. Simeon Booker
Jet Magazine



The Administrator

February 2, 2023

Dear Members and Supporters of the Thursday Luncheon Group:

On behalf of all of us at USAID, it is my honor to congratulate the Thursday Luncheon Group (TLG) as you celebrate 50 years of leadership in advancing representation, equity, and racial justice at the Department of State and USAID.

TLG greats, including Ambassador Edward Perkins, Ambassador Ruth Davis, Ambassador Andrew Young, and my friend, Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, have been trailblazers in extending opportunity and advancing justice for marginalized communities both at home and abroad. Even amid periods of great inequity and injustice here in the United States, TLG members have demonstrated great determination to advance that essential work and craft a foreign policy rooted in dignity and human rights.

I was pleased to learn that, since 2018, TLG’s membership is open to USAID staff who are working to advance human dignity, freedom, prosperity, and health in developing communities. Your USAID colleagues readily lock arms with you to make our national security agencies more equitable, inclusive, accessible, and reflective of America. Though we have much more work to do, please know you have a proud and committed partner in USAID.

I am grateful for your continued dedication to cultivating the next generation of international development and diplomatic leaders. Looking back at TLG pioneers, I have no doubt that today’s emerging leaders will proudly advance your invaluable mandate in the name of the United States of America.

Sincerely,

Samantha Power

Association of Black American Ambassadors (ABAA)

Tribute to the Thursday Luncheon Group on its 50th Anniversary!

The Association of Black American Ambassadors (ABAA) congratulates the Thursday Luncheon Group (TLG) on its 50th anniversary and successful track record of advocacy for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion at the U.S. Department of State and across the foreign affairs community. Many in ABAA began to champion diversity at State as TLG members and sustained their commitment as their careers developed. Through committed action, joint programming, and united advocacy ABAA has supported the TLG and will continue to stand with the organization as a partner and friend.

The TLG has shown its sense of shared mission by selecting African American Ambassadors as TLG Pioneers, the organization’s highest honor. They include:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Terrance A. Todman (2002)* | Aurelia E. Brazeal (2002) |
| Edward J. Perkins (2007) | Horace Dawson (2007) |
| Mosina H. Jordan (2007) | Ronald Palmer (2007) |
| Ruth A. Davis (2009)* | Joyce A. Barr (2017) |
| Teddy B. Taylor (2017) | Linda Thomas-Greenfield (2017) |
| Harry K. Thomas (2019) | Harriet Elam-Thomas (2022) |
| Larry Palmer (2022) | Johnny Young (2022) |

*Career Ambassador

ABAA salutes TLG’s history and amazing growth. What started out as a small group of black officers who pressed for more diversity at State in 1973 has blossomed. Fifty years later the TLG is now a powerful organization with hundreds of members. Its tireless work has helped the State Department increase the number of African Americans and others from under-represented groups, who work throughout the organization, for the benefit of U.S. national interests and values, as well as overall foreign policy goals.

“Yes, you can!” was the theme of ABAA veteran and TLG Pioneer Ambassador Ruth A. Davis when she addressed the 45th TLG Anniversary event. Since then, the group has said “yes!” to more members and has extended its influence and presence through proposals for change, events, social media posts and programs. ABAA salutes the members, supporters, and friends of the TLG and wishes the organization another 50 years of success as we work together to advocate for a Foreign Service and foreign affairs community that looks like America.

The Association of Black American Ambassadors

February 2, 2023

Event Program

Thursday Luncheon Group
50th Anniversary Luncheon
U.S. Department of State
Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room
February 2, 2023

Introduction

Candice Helton
Thursday Luncheon Group, Vice President
The Quantico Marine Corps Brass Quintet

Welcome and Recognition

Krystle Norman
Thursday Luncheon Group, Vice President

TLG Pioneer Awards Presentation

Presenter: Ghaida Ahmad
Pioneer Awardee: Ambassador C. Steven McGann (ret.)
Presenter: Abbie Ferguson
Pioneer Awardee: Ambassador Pamela E. Bridgewater (ret.)

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley
Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer

Keynote Remarks

Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State

Lifetime Membership Presentation

Ambassador Ruth Davis (ret.)

Musical Selection

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”
The Quantico Marine Corp Brass Quintet

President’s Remarks

Dr. Yolonda Kerney
Thursday Luncheon Group, President

~ **Lunch Served** ~



**BPIA President Alexandria J. Maloney
and Board of Directors**

CONGRATULATES THURSDAY LUNCHEON GROUP ON 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

FEBRUARY 2023



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THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DIPLOMACY

January 19, 2023

Yolonda Kerney
The Thursday Luncheon Group
U.S. Department of State
2011 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20037

Dear Ms. Kerney and the members of the Thursday Luncheon Group,

The American Academy of Diplomacy sends its heartfelt congratulations to all of you on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Thursday Luncheon Group (TLG). Since 1973, the TLG grew from an informal gathering to an authoritative leader with more than 500 members effectively pushing for increased participation of African Americans and other minorities in the formulation, articulation, and implementation of U.S. foreign policy.

Thank you for all the work that TLG has done over the past 50 years toward the goal of greater diversity and inclusion within the State Department and USAID. Diversity enhances U.S. national security interests in fielding the strongest possible diplomatic representation. The importance of TLG's tireless efforts in advocacy, mentorship, and recognition of excellence are undeniable when we take stock of the progress that has been achieved in the Department and at USAID on diversity and inclusion, particularly over the last few years.

While there is still more work to do in ensuring that America's main diplomatic institutions look like the America they represent, the Academy is reassured by the fact that TLG is one of the leaders in this area and the Academy looks forward to working alongside TLG toward a more diverse, equitable and representative U.S. diplomatic corps of the future.

Once again, thank you and congratulations on this momentous milestone!

Sincerely,

Ambassador Ronald E. Neumann (ret.)
President
American Academy of Diplomacy



DACOR

An Organization of
Foreign Affairs Professionals

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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January 16, 2023

Dr. Yolonda V. Kerney
President
Thursday Luncheon Group
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Kerney,

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of DACOR's more than 1,500 members to extend congratulations and best wishes to the Thursday Luncheon Group on its 50th anniversary.

Since its founding in 1973, the TLG has compiled a remarkable record of achievement in preparing the next generation of leaders and serving as the leading voice on diversity matters within the then United States Information Agency, the Department of State and the Agency for International Development.

As the TLG continues to meet the challenge of increasing the participation of African Americans in the formulation, articulation and implementation of United States foreign policy, DACOR is honored to add its voice to those in the larger diplomatic community wishing the TLG continued success.

I and my colleagues at DACOR and the DACOR Bacon House Foundation look forward to joining you at the February 2 luncheon marking the TLG's 50th anniversary.

Warm regards,

James Dandridge II, President
DACOR Inc. and the DACOR Bacon House Foundation
Washington, D.C.

Member of TLG since 1979

Proud recipient of the TLG Pioneers Plaque in 2022



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January 23, 2023

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The Thursday Luncheon Group

Dear TLG Executive Board,

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) salutes the Thursday Luncheon Group (TLG) on the occasion of your 50th anniversary. We look forward to further enriching our Foreign Affairs Oral History archive with more oral histories by TLG members. We are proud to already have a number of these oral histories and hope for closer collaboration to continue to capture these stories and perspectives. They are an important part of the legacy of modern American diplomacy which ADST is dedicated to capturing in the voices of its practitioners – and to sharing broadly.

Warmest best wishes and congratulations!

Susan R. Johnson

President, on behalf of ADST

202.682.0500

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