

FDIC News

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Employee Newsletter

JANUARY 2019

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FDIC Hosts First Interagency Leadership Development Symposium

Speakers shared best practices in leadership development.

By **CLAIRE BROLIN**
School of Leadership Development, CU

Corporate University's (CU) School of Leadership Development hosted the first Interagency Leadership Development Symposium in October in the Sheila C. Bair Auditorium. The event, entitled "Next Generation Leaders: Sharing Interagency Best Practices," featured guest speakers from academia

and industry along with experts in the field of federal leadership development who discussed best practices at their agencies. "The FDIC is taking a primary role in developing our future federal leaders," said Andrew Rahaman, Associate Professor, School of Leadership Development.

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School of Leadership Development Associate Professor Alphonzo Moseley, DSL, right, leads a roundtable discussion on the Corporation's Leadership Development Program for First-Line Supervisors.

The *FDIC News* is published monthly by the Office of Communications of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 550 17th Street N.W., Room 7102 Washington, DC 20429

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SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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Attending were Chief Learning Officers (CLOs), Deans, Training Directors, Instructors, and Developers from more than 35 federal agencies and offices, including:

- Air Force Research Laboratory
- Architect of the Capitol
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Defense
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Department of Homeland Security
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Government Accountability Office
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Credit Union Administration
- National Library of Medicine
- National Nuclear Security Administration

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Science Foundation
- Office of Personnel Management
- Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
- U.S. Economic Development Administration

The symposium opened with a panel of government leadership development experts representing HHS, SEC and FDIC. Following the panel, presenters from American University, the Center for Creative Leadership, and Deloitte Consulting discussed resilience and skills needed by the future workforce.

In the afternoon, speakers, including two FDIC leadership faculty, made 11 concurrent roundtable presentations featuring agency best practices. The roundtable format enabled each attendee to participate in four best practice discus-

sions. Christelle LaPolice, Ph.D., Dean of the College of Leadership at the SEC, presented a roundtable discussion on the SEC's coaching program.

Members of the School of Leadership Development faculty—Associate Dean Basil Read, Ph.D.; Associate Professor Andrew Rahaman, Ed.D.; and Associate Professor Al Moseley, DSL—presented during the symposium.

Feedback from the 90-plus attendees was very positive, with many commending the FDIC for creating a forum for dialogue and exchange on leadership development issues. According to Basil Read, “We were able to bring together the key influencers in Federal Leadership Development programs to foster a community that can learn from one another and provide a venue that allowed us to showcase the vital work we do.” 🏛️

DCP Senior Deputy Director Sylvia Plunkett Concludes 40-Year FDIC Career

Leader, visionary, pioneer, innovator, mentor, teacher, coach—Plunkett leaves a profound legacy.

By SALLY KEARNEY
Office of Communications

Over the course of more than 40 years, Sylvia Plunkett served with distinction as a consummate professional who was highly regarded throughout the FDIC. As Senior Deputy Director for the Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP) for the past eight years, Plunkett successfully led the FDIC's consumer protection program, implementing improvements in financial institutions' compliance with consumer protection requirements. As just one example, her leadership of FDIC enforcement efforts resulted in two of the largest consumer protection actions in FDIC history, with nearly \$300 million returned to consumers harmed by illegal practices.

Speaking at Sylvia Plunkett's December 13 retirement reception, Chairman Jelena McWilliams paid tribute to her many contributions. "Sylvia leaves an indelible mark on the FDIC's consumer protection program—an issue close to my heart," Chairman McWilliams said. "She has led her team to bring actions to stop illegal lending practices and to ensure banks provided restitution to harmed consumers. In short, under Sylvia's leadership, the FDIC can ensure that consumers are treated fairly. Maybe even more impressive ... is the impact that Sylvia has had on others within the Corporation. Sylvia helped start the FDIC's Mentoring Program 20 years ago, and she has served as mentor in the program every year since. Sylvia has always given fully of herself to the benefit of the others and to the FDIC."

Plunkett led several projects within the FDIC Community Banking Initiative, including improving communication with institutions and spearheading DCP's Consumer Harm Initiative to improve efficiency in the examination process by developing and implementing a risk-focused approach. She was honored with the 2012 *Chairman's Excellence Award—Executive* for her achievements.

Plunkett's influence is far-reaching. Through her ability to see the "big picture" and innovate, she was instrumental in establishing two major divisions at the

FDIC: the former Division of Compliance and Consumer Affairs (DCA); and the current Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP). As a manager, she guided and counseled numerous staff members to develop their best strengths and skills. As a founder of the FDIC Mentoring Program who has served as a mentor since the program was piloted and launched—and more recently as a mentor in the FDIC Leadership Mentoring Program—she has guided, coached, and shared the benefits of her wisdom with mentees seeking answers and direction. As a policymaker, she has helped countless consumers whose financial lives have been protected in some way by a woman they never met. And yet, they too have been touched by Sylvia Plunkett.

Plunkett's retirement at the end of 2018 marks the culmination of a remarkable FDIC career. Equally remarkable are the early indications that hers would not be an ordinary path.

Plunkett's influence is far-reaching. Through her ability to see the "big picture" and innovate, she was instrumental in establishing two major divisions at the FDIC: the former Division of Compliance and Consumer Affairs (DCA); and the current Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP).

A Promising Start

Sylvia Plunkett's FDIC story begins in 1978 in Gulfport, Mississippi, a coastal city on the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi Sound. The daughter of a father who instilled in her a strong work ethic, and a mother who balanced things out with a light touch, Plunkett grew up in a large family, the second of 10 children. Among her siblings, Plunkett was a precocious advisor. "I was always helping my younger sisters and brothers growing up," she said. When she went off to college at Mississippi State University, her fellow students regularly came to her with their problems. "I also worked with youth groups at church," she said. "Mentoring is a natural fit for me, and it



An exceptional leader and mentor, Sylvia Plunkett recently concluded a 40-year FDIC career.

makes me feel good."

Having graduated from Mississippi State with a bachelor of science degree in business, Plunkett was working for the county when a cousin urged her to take the civil service test and get a job with the federal government. "You'd be good at it," she recalled him saying.

Heeding his advice, Plunkett went to the Gulfport Post Office, filled out an application, and took the civil service test. She earned her highest score in math, a subject that had always fascinated her. Soon a letter from the FDIC informed her that she had been selected for an interview. Plunkett traveled to the FDIC's field office in Hattiesburg, where she met the field supervisor and was offered a job.

The bank examiner trainee job was in Memphis, Tennessee, at least temporarily. On her first day, Plunkett learned that in 90 days she would be reassigned to another to-be-determined location. When the three months were nearly up, Plunkett found out that she was heading to the same field office in Hattiesburg where she had interviewed. For a few years, she worked in Hattiesburg, until that office closed as part of a field office consolidation. Her next move was to Jackson, Mississippi, where she earned her commis-

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sion as a safety and soundness examiner.

With her commission in hand, Plunkett started teaching bank examiner classes at the FDIC's training center in Washington, D.C. She discovered that she loved teaching and went on to teach the examiners' "first school" for many years. "I've often been one to teach people and help them do things," she said.

Such was also the case during bank examinations. A colleague, Larry Paul, former Special Assistant to the RMS Director and now retired, recently told Plunkett a story about her "legacy" during their bank examiner days. Paul was an examiner assigned to the Jackson Field Office after Plunkett had left. Nevertheless, during examinations, Paul remembered that team members often asked "what Sylvia did when she was here." "Everybody wanted to follow what I did because I left such good work papers," Plunkett recalled. A logical thinker, Plunkett had documented each step meticulously and "put things down in order so it was easy for people to follow."

It turned out that her cousin had been right. She was good at this.

A Major Transition

Plunkett was busily engaged in her work as a bank examiner in Jackson when she received a call from a review examiner in

the Memphis Regional Office. A couple of review examiner spots had opened up in Memphis, and she might want to consider applying, he said, adding that the regional office was impressed with her work and thought she would be a good review examiner. His words echoed those of her cousin and reinforced a theme that would define Plunkett's career: others regularly singled her out and urged her to take on new challenges.

When she went off to college at Mississippi State University, her fellow students regularly came to her with their problems. "I also worked with youth groups at church," she said. "Mentoring is a natural fit for me, and it makes me feel good."

But this time, Plunkett was skeptical. "I told him that I liked the travel. I was in Mississippi where my family lived, and I could see people all over the state," she said. The review examiner remained undeterred, however. "He said that everybody gets tired of the travel sooner or later, and when you get tired, there may not be a position available," she recalled.

Recognizing the wisdom of this advice, Plunkett returned to Memphis in 1985. Once there, she realized that she faced a major change: the surroundings were familiar, but the job was different. "As an examiner you work with a team all the time, and you always have people around you," she said. "As a review examiner, you have your own office and work more independently. I missed the camaraderie of the team."

At first, Plunkett wandered inquiringly, making the rounds of her colleagues' offices. "It was funny because they would tease me and tell me to go back to my office and do my work," she recalled. "I asked, 'When do you all talk to each other?'" During breaks was the reply, so Plunkett was the first to arrive at the break room at the appointed times. There, she found camaraderie. "I felt isolated initially until I got used to it," she said.

She quickly realized the advantage of her situation. "Staying in my office, I did a lot of work, and I am a fast worker, so I got a lot done," she said. When told, half-seriously, that she was doing too

much, Plunkett saw her chance to tease. "I said, 'You don't talk to me, so I have nothing to do but work!'"

The work Plunkett was doing so energetically was processing applications. A detail assignment at headquarters involving applications gave Plunkett the chance to expand her network of contacts at the FDIC. When the oil patch crisis emerged, she spent time at problem banks in Louisiana. The S&L crisis followed. Plunkett became an Assistant Regional Director (ARD) in Memphis, overseeing administration, compliance, trust, and IT. She was busier than ever. "It was a challenging time, but also very exciting," she said.

A New Division

In 1994, a new division was created to place a greater emphasis on compliance and consumer issues—the Division of Compliance and Consumer Affairs (DCA). Since Plunkett was already overseeing compliance in Memphis as an ARD, she was offered the opportunity to join DCA, first as a regional manager in Memphis, and later as regional director.

For the first time—but not the last—Plunkett had the chance to build something new. "I considered how to establish my own structure, including how many people I needed," she said. "Initially we hired people from the risk management side and then later did direct hiring for compliance examiners."

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Plunkett's talent as an organizational architect did not go unnoticed: she also supported the corporate-wide effort to envision and develop DCA into "a real division."

Meanwhile, Plunkett was learning how to manage a team, with some coaching

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As DCP Senior Deputy Director, Plunkett oversaw the entire corps of compliance examiners, review examiners, field supervisors, and deputy regional directors for compliance.

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from the Memphis Regional Director. “He told me to think about where I wanted to go next, and he pushed me,” she said. “So I got into leadership and management, and encouraging and developing people.”

A Steady Ascent

The next several years saw Plunkett advancing steadily. In 2002, when the divisions of supervision and compliance were combined into a single division, Plunkett moved to Dallas as Deputy Regional Director for Compliance. The Memphis Regional Office was included in the Dallas Region as the Memphis Area Office. Responsible as DRD for a large, multistate territory, Plunkett traveled extensively.

When an examiner suggested that she visit the field offices to make her case effectively, Plunkett listened.

“The examiner said to change the way we do exams, you have to bring the supervisors and examiners together. I thought that was a good idea, so I decided to visit every field territory.”

Four years later, in 2006, Plunkett moved north to serve as Chicago Regional Director. Now supervising both safety and soundness and compliance, Plunkett had brought the two parts of her experience together. “It was a pretty easy transition because I had my safety and soundness commission and had worked as a risk examiner,” she said. “Probably the biggest challenge was the climate going from Dallas to Chicago.”

In 2008, Sandra Thompson, then Director of the Division of Supervision and Consumer Protection (DSC), asked Plunkett to come to Washington, D.C., as Associate Director for Compliance. The financial crisis was on the front burner, and once again, Plunkett was in demand.

A Pivotal Role

In 2011, the Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP) was established, and in early 2012, Plunkett was named Senior Deputy Director. It would be the last position she would hold at the FDIC, and a pivotal one. Again, she would be deeply involved in launching a new division at the FDIC. She would

oversee the entire FDIC corps of compliance examiners, review examiners, field supervisors, and deputy regional directors for compliance. And she would be a leader in shaping consumer protection policy. “With DCP, we were establishing a division and trying to decide what the focus would be for the things that we would do,” she said.

Plunkett had found her niche. “I like starting something new—taking an idea, building it, implementing it, and getting people on board,” she said. “So this was the right thing at the right time.”

When former Chairman Martin Gruenberg announced the Community Banking Initiative, Plunkett sprang to action. “I started thinking about how we could make our processes more helpful for community banks, to be more efficient and effective. We frequently received complaints that we took too long in the banks. We pulled together working groups and found ways to improve our process, especially in the pre-examination planning phase so that we would spend less time onsite. We saw that as a win-win for the bankers as well as for the examiners, and it worked out well.”

Plunkett directed her energies to another opportunity for improvement. “We heard complaints that our examinations were too focused on technical issues, so we started an initiative in 2012 to become more risk focused. We put together working groups to see how we could focus more on consumer harm and not look at every little technical violation,” she said.

Encountering a degree of resistance to change, Plunkett decided to hold training sessions for compliance examiners, review examiners, and field supervisors. In each session, she conducted informal discussions from a chair at the center of the auditorium stage. “They called it my Oprah chair,” she said, laughing. “It really opened it up so people could start talking.”

When an examiner suggested that she visit the field offices to make her case effectively, Plunkett listened. “The examiner said to change the way we do exams, you have to bring the supervisors and examiners together. I thought that was a good idea, so I decided to visit every field territory.” Plunkett traveled to all 32 compliance field territories from November 2015

to November 2016. “I spent anywhere from two to four hours with the staffs and their supervisors just talking about their concerns and possible benefits.”

In 2017, another round of training was held, and when, at the end, Plunkett asked how many attendees thought the risk-focused approach concentrating on consumer harm was the best way to examine banks, she received a 99 percent favorable response. “People really bought in and said that my visiting the field offices made a difference.” She added: “It was a lot of fun. The offices are not all in places that are easy to reach, so I had some travel adventures.”

This was just one example of how Plunkett connected with the hundreds of people she oversaw. “I have always related to examiners and the work they do,” she said. “I have been in their shoes, and I remember what it was like. I recognize that they have to do their job, so I try to support them. I look for ways to help them do better.”

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Helping others do better has been a Plunkett trademark. When the recommendation for an FDIC mentoring program surfaced in the late 1990s, Plunkett was central to piloting and implementing the program, which launched in 1999, and she became an icon as the program’s most well-known and sought-after mentor. (*See companion story on page 9, “Sylvia Plunkett: A Mentor’s Mentor.”*)

Plunkett also guided compliance executives in the regions. Her leadership discussions have focused on helping DRDs think not only about the impact of their actions on their region, but on DCP and the FDIC as a whole. “Managers are often selected because they knew how to do their prior jobs,” she said. “But to prepare for the next step, you have to look beyond where you are and see the bigger picture.”

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Plunkett's contributions have also extended beyond the FDIC. When the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was established in 2011, Plunkett represented the FDIC in discussions with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Reserve to develop a Memorandum of Understanding on how the agencies would coordinate supervision. "We built a really good working relationship with the CFPB, and I think it also strengthened the relationship with the OCC and the Fed," she recalled.

A Consummate Leader

And so Sylvia Plunkett's FDIC story ends more than 40 years after it began. What is striking about the span of those four decades is how prepared she was for

each opportunity that arose.

She attributes this in part to her ability to listen. "I'm a really good listener, and I listen before I speak," she said. "When I move into a new position, I always like to understand the layout. I believe that you don't have to show that you are the smartest person in the room by out-talking everybody else. Sometimes it's good just to listen. When I am in meetings with people, especially those senior to me, I like to get a sense of how the discussions are going and how people are reacting. I listen to what is happening and try to understand what they want to accomplish. I'm a quick study, so if I understand the concept, I can learn the details around how to put it together. When people explain things to me, I can usually get it pretty quickly."

Listening has many rewards, she said.

"People don't realize its value. Even if there is something that is not directly related to me, eventually it is going to come around, and I will see how to apply it to my situation. So much information inside the FDIC is transferable."

Listening may also explain Plunkett's rare ability to connect with so many people. "What I like is that people feel they can talk to me," she said. "They call me and send emails. It's really good to have that relationship. They believe I am working for their best interests and the best interests of consumer compliance and the FDIC."

Plunkett's FDIC story may have ended, but her next story is just beginning. It seems fitting that she will start by coming full circle. "Sometime in 2019," she said, "I will move back home to Gulfport." ♣

Honoring Sylvia Plunkett

"Sylvia leaves an indelible mark on the FDIC's consumer protection program—an issue close to my heart ... She has led her team to bring actions to stop illegal lending practices and to ensure banks provided restitution to harmed consumers. In short, under Sylvia's leadership, the FDIC can ensure that consumers are treated fairly. Maybe even more impressive ... is the impact that Sylvia has had on others within the Corporation. Sylvia helped start the FDIC's Mentoring Program 20 years ago, and she has served as mentor in the program every year since. She has always given fully of herself to the benefit of the others and to the FDIC."

—FDIC Chairman Jelena McWilliams

"Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement! You are one leader who has inspired so many here at the FDIC, and you are definitely leaving a wonderful legacy of success among those you have mentored, developed, and coached along the way. The FDIC is a much better place with the many contributions you have so willingly shared. Best wishes on this new and exciting phase you are embarking on."

—Arleas Upton Kea, Deputy to the Chairman and Chief Operating Officer

"Sylvia has made a tremendous positive impact during her career—not just on making banking safer for consumers and the public—but as a leader, a role model, a mentor, and a colleague within the FDIC. While we will miss her presence, I know the ripples from her legacy will be felt for a long time to come."

—Mark Pearce, DCP Director

"Sylvia's forty-year career epitomizes the dedication of FDIC employees to the mission of the agency. She has risen from risk management examiner and compliance examiner in Memphis, to Dallas Deputy Regional Director and Chicago Regional Director, to Senior Deputy Director for DCP in Washington, overseeing the FDIC's compliance and CRA examination program. In every role, Sylvia has demonstrated the highest level of competence, strong leadership, and a passionate commitment to the FDIC. She leaves behind an extraordinary record of service and will be greatly missed."

—FDIC Director Martin Gruenberg

"It's been an honor and a pleasure working with Sylvia. Her support of the Mentoring Program has been unmatched, and she has further served as a role model for all through her devotion to public service and commitment to excellence in carrying out her duties. I wish her the very best in her well-earned retirement!"

—Doreen Eberley, RMS Director

"My favorite quote from Sylvia is 'Think it through.' She always said before making a major decision to make sure I had thought through a variety of scenarios and the potential implications ... not once, but a few times when making big decisions."

—Nikita Pearson, Associate Director, DCP

"Advice: Work beyond your current position to prepare for the next position on the horizon."

—Kathy Moe, San Francisco Regional Director

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“I have worked with Sylvia in a variety of capacities and on a multitude of issues over many years. I invariably found her to be thoughtful, practical, and professional. More importantly, from my point of view, was that Sylvia always understood and supported a corporate perspective, no matter what the subject was. We will miss her wisdom and counsel enormously.”

—Thomas Peddicord, DOF Deputy Director

“As someone new to the FDIC and federal service, I could not ask for a better role model than Sylvia. She has mastered the art of being the consummate professional at all times, while also being a compassionate, kind colleague and friend. What’s more, she makes it look easy ... and it isn’t.”

—Elizabeth Ortiz, Deputy Director of Consumer and Community Affairs, DCP

“During her career, Sylvia Plunkett has truly been a trail-blazer at the FDIC. She was one of the first African-American women to serve in a leadership role at the agency. Sylvia’s dedication to bank supervision (compliance and risk management) and her commitment to mentoring and developing others were among her strongest attributes. She was an avid listener and provided sage advice on many complex examination matters. I want to thank Sylvia for her leadership, her friendship, and her service to the FDIC and to the country. I wish her all the best in her retirement.”

—Michael Dean, Atlanta Regional Director

“I first got the chance to work closely with Sylvia during the early days of Dodd-Frank implementation. We were representing the FDIC in interagency negotiations to develop a Memorandum of Understanding for supervisory coordination of large banks. Throughout the long process, which often included strong differences of opinion among agency representatives, Sylvia always kept us focused on the objective and what was essential for the FDIC to meet its responsibilities. Sylvia knows when to recommend compromise and when to stand firm.

“Over the years, I have observed that Sylvia is such an effective leader because she stays focused on the goal and the deliverables while always inviting collaboration and others’ views.

“Sylvia is warm and dedicated. Always ready to make the tough decisions, she also cares about and listens to people and their opinions before making the call. I will miss Sylvia and her unique ability to bring such amazing institutional history to every issue or challenge, but always with a look to the future and its promise.”

—Michael Briggs, Senior Counsel, Consumer Section, Legal Division

“I’ve had the pleasure of working with Sylvia on the Training Oversight Committee for the past several years. The DCP and RMS training programs continue to benefit from her expertise and dedication to providing our examiners with outstanding training. I wish her all the best in retirement.”

—John Vogel, New York Regional Director

“Sylvia has an extremely rare blend of field, region, and headquarters experience. This, coupled with her passion for the consumer harm identification and remediation mission of DCP, sets her apart from all of us. Her network of colleagues inside and outside the agency is amazing. Her energy and drive for improvement will be missed.”

—Todd Hendrickson, Associate Director, DCP

“Sylvia will be greatly missed. Throughout her career she has taken the time to mentor numerous people and ensure DCP has a strong training program. She made herself accessible to everyone and created an environment of trust and transparency. Her legacy will be that she left the organization in a better place than where it was prior to her leadership in DCP.”

—Kristie Elmquist, Dallas Regional Director

“I will miss Sylvia’s tremendous leadership. We have had a lot of significant discussions over the years, and I always appreciated two important aspects to these conversations: first, that she was always willing to listen to all sides of the issue to ensure she had all the facts; and second, to make a timely decision. She was a pleasure to work with, and I wish her the best in retirement.”

—Scott Strockoz, Deputy Regional Director, DCP, New York Region

“Thank you for your countless contributions to the FDIC. Thank you for making work fun, interesting, and challenging. Thank you for being an unofficial mentor. Thank you for believing in me and my abilities. Thank you for being such a kind and caring person. Simply, thank you and Happy Retirement!”

—Phyllis Patton, Deputy Regional Director, DCP, Atlanta Region

“The ‘glass ceiling’ did not deter. She persisted. She broke through. But with Sylvia, she did it all with her usual good grace and equanimity, with her usual kindness and consideration for others.

“Hard work, leadership, and grace under pressure are her hallmarks. So, it is no surprise that Sylvia worked her way up the ladder successfully on both sides of bank supervision: safety and soundness and compliance. No easy feat.

“It has been an honor to work with her. What is one thing that stands out, that she leaves behind?

“The measure of an executive is how many people she ‘brings along’ with her. Mentoring someone is hard work. It is extra work. It takes time. But Sylvia was a ‘natural’ and committed. I marveled as I watched her mentor so many over the years, so many who are now today’s young leaders. Yes, I think this will be one of Sylvia’s lasting gifts back to the FDIC, leaving it a much better place, in the hands of those she mentored.

“May the road rise up to meet you, Sylvia.”

—Bob Mooney, former National Director for Minority and Community Development Banking

see Tributes, page 8, column 1

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Tributes from page 7

“Some persons may have misinterpreted Sylvia’s honey-tinged Southern drawl and refined manner as meekness. In the almost 30 years I’ve known Sylvia, I’ve not seen a meek side! She is strong, capable, practical, and smart. She has a healthy sense of humor, a large dose of empathy, and a strong commitment to FDIC’s compliance and consumer protection mission. As Sylvia rose in the ranks, she never lost the common touch. I know as an African-American female executive, Sylvia faced challenges. But she managed to turn those challenges into opportunities. As she retires from the FDIC after 40 remarkable years of service, Sylvia Plunkett leaves a lasting legacy for many colleagues who are walking through doors she helped to open at the Corporation.”

—Donna Gambrell, former DCP Deputy Director

“Sylvia epitomizes what it takes to be a great leader and human being through all that she’s accomplished and empowered others to do. I will miss her greatly!!”

—Lorraine Dennison, Executive Assistant to the Chairman

“Upon returning to the FDIC in 2008, I was very happy to renew my friendship with Sylvia. I served as her Section Chief, and for the next three years, we worked with our staff to face challenges and resolve some very interesting and unique cases. While we worked hard, we also found time to laugh and become good friends. Sylvia believed in our mission and worked to achieve established goals and objectives. However, what I most admired about her was her ability to have a good work-life balance. Her daughter Alice is an accomplished young woman due to the loving efforts of her mother and father.

“Sylvia’s contributions to the FDIC have made it a stronger organization, and her friendship has made my life better. I wish her the very best as she begins this new chapter in her life. I can attest that the adventures continue, but the pressing deadlines become a thing of the past!”

—Alice Beshara, former DCP Section Chief

“Sylvia always exhibited great subject matter expertise, but she was also especially noted for her calmness under pressure. Both traits served her well and the Corporation well, and were greatly appreciated.”

—Chris Spoth, former RMS Deputy Director

“Having known Sylvia since we were both newly commissioned bank examiners, I have seen firsthand how she has demonstrated time and again a high level of competence and leadership skills. Combined with her sparkling personality, she has been effective in relating to both her FDIC colleagues and banking officials. I was witness to Sylvia’s talents when we worked together in the Dallas Region and Sylvia served as the Deputy Regional Director for Compliance and Consumer Affairs. She performed all of her duties in an exemplary manner. Through the years, Sylvia has contributed to the FDIC well beyond her day-to-day responsibilities. In addition to being one of the early organizers of the Corporation’s minority college recruiting program, she was active in banker outreach and educational initiatives, as well as a participant in the diversity program. Sylvia was a pleasure to work with, and I wish her nothing but the best in retirement!”

—John Carter, former San Francisco Regional Director

“Congratulations, Sylvia. I wish you well as you embark on this next phase of your life. You have been an inspiration to many through your illustrious career. Your dedication to duty and public service has rewarded you well. Your intellect, wisdom, political savvy, and perseverance have benefited you, the Corporation, and many others over the years. I was fortunate to work directly with you and admired your work ethic. You were undying in your efforts to improve the next generation. We were often referred to as the ‘Mother’ and ‘Father’ of the Mentoring Program. This was a Corporate initiative we really believed in and felt it made a positive impact on those employees desiring to maximize a relationship with a ‘wise advisor.’ I thank you for the good times we shared and welcome you to the club of retirees.”

—L. Ray Jackson, former Deputy Regional Director, Chicago Region

FDIC PROFILE

Sylvia Plunkett: A Mentor's Mentor

By SALLY KEARNEY
Office of Communications

Sylvia Plunkett is so widely known and highly regarded as an exemplary mentor that her name has almost become synonymous with the FDIC Mentoring Program. Indeed, this impression is not far off the mark, because Plunkett served on the working group that created the framework for the Mentoring Program. She was among the first group of mentors to pilot the program in 1999, and she has been a mentor in the program ever since. More recently, she also served as a mentor in the Leadership Mentoring Program.

Impressive as this is, Plunkett has in fact worn the mentoring mantle for much longer. Since joining the FDIC, and especially since becoming a manager, Plunkett has informally mentored dozens and dozens of employees and formally mentored 16 employees. "I have mentored a lot of people in my direct supervisory line who I thought could do more," she said. "I tend to push people a little bit to be better. At the end, they'll say, 'I'm really glad you made me do that, even though I didn't want to do it.'"

When Plunkett learned about a possible mentoring program in the works, she volunteered to represent her division on the working group. "Challenges we considered were: would we get enough mentors; and could long-distance mentoring partnerships succeed," she recalled. Plunkett, along with each member of the working group, agreed to serve as

mentors in the pilot, and not surprisingly, Plunkett chose a long-distance mentoring partnership. "My first mentee was in Dallas and from a different division, and I thought that would be interesting," she said. "It actually helped me build a bigger perspective because I heard about what was going on in another division."

The partnership worked. Mentor and mentee scheduled weekly phone calls, and when Plunkett was in Dallas, they met in person. When the pilot ended, Plunkett wanted to continue. "I felt like I got so much out of it that I wanted to keep participating," she said. And she did.

The hour reserved for mentoring became an important part of Plunkett's schedule. "I often tell the story that when I close my door for that one hour of mentoring time, I forget about what's on my desk or what's on my computer, and focus strictly on mentoring. As I talk to that person about what is going on in their career, when I come back to my work, I get re-energized and I am more productive after that one hour away."

But mostly, the rewards for Plunkett have to do with helping mentees. "I feel like I'm giving back," she said. "I have accomplished things in my career, and it feels good to help someone else and see



Arleas Upton Kea recognizes Sylvia Plunkett for her outstanding dedication and contributions to the FDIC Mentoring Program at the program's 2017 orientation.

that person do well and move up. That's the most rewarding part for me."

Over the years, the Mentoring Program has become one of the FDIC's most popular developmental programs, thanks in no small part to Plunkett's role as the "Mentoring Goddess," as some have fondly dubbed her. The Leadership Mentoring Program, modeled after the Mentoring Program, focuses on guiding managers and executives; Plunkett mentors in that program as well.

The results of Plunkett's mentoring is evident in the "village" of mentees across the Corporation who have benefited from her advice, counsel, and support. A few former mentees commented below on having Sylvia Plunkett as a mentor. 🏡

"Sylvia was my mentor in 2008. She was an excellent mentor and helped me to better understand FDIC processes and divisions. Sylvia always made time for me and helped me to grow. To me, what made her an exceptional mentor was that she cared and was committed to the Mentoring Program. She was authentic and genuine in all of her efforts."

—Sheree Haywood, Paralegal Specialist, Chicago Regional Office

"Sylvia was a wise, compassionate, generous mentor. She always had sage advice and was willing to listen and work through any issues I faced. She taught me that it is important

to be passionate about the work you do and to be compassionate toward your team."

—Rosalind Bennett, Associate Director, Center for Financial Research, DIR

"It was an honor to have Sylvia as a mentor. She really impacted my career by directing me to focus on what type of work I wanted to do versus what type of work I was capable of doing. It was so empowering. The time spent with Sylvia will have a positive impact on my career for years to come."

—Peggi Gill, Chief, Consumer Affairs Section, DCP

see Mentor, page 10, column 1

FDIC PROFILE

Mentor, from page 9

“As I reflect on my mentoring experience with Sylvia 13 years ago, I remember her as a good listener, very disciplined and unflappable. Excellent qualities anyone would want in a mentor. From Sylvia, I learned the power of focus, which helped to propel me to cross the finish line and pivot into my ‘new life’ in retirement with 30 years of varied public service as an attorney with the FDIC’s Legal Division.”

—Rita Ross, former Counsel, Legal Division

“The most important lesson I learned from Sylvia was to always be prepared for the next opportunity, whenever it occurs. She taught me to utilize the resources and training tools the Corporation offers to employees. Sylvia is a very good listener, motivator, and communicator. She has a deliberate, non-judgmental temperament.”

—Jeannie Flood, Resolutions and Closing Manager, DRR Strategic Operations, Dallas

“The one word that comes to mind when I think of Sylvia as a mentor is dedicated. Sylva was very dedicated to the Mentoring Program and took time out of her busy schedule

to foster lasting mentor-mentee relationships. I loved talking with her about her ability to manage a very successful career and obtain work-life balance. I was in awe that she was able to do it all.”

—Rhonda Henry Stephens, Administrative Assistant, Memphis, RMS

“Sylvia helped me become more perceptive about analyzing situations. This strengthened my thought processes and aided me in rendering better decisions. Sylvia’s strong, sincere commitment to helping others succeed make her truly exceptional.”

—Loretta Foreman, HR Specialist, DOA

“Sylvia took a personal interest in our mentoring relationship. She invested in my success and empowered me to develop my strengths, beliefs, and personal attributes. One of my goals was to earn an MBA degree. Sylvia was very supportive in helping me to accomplish my goal. I never gave up. She came to my graduation in November 2003.”

—Gwendolyn Hudson, Financial Management Analyst, DRR, Dallas



Illustration: Mike Theuer Portraits

This illustration was presented to Sylvia Plunkett by her mentorees in the FDIC Mentoring Program and the FDIC Leadership Mentoring Program. Outside illustrations, clockwise from bottom left: Kay Henley, Jeannie Flood, Lekeshia Frasure, Danielle Davis, Peggi Gill, Sheree Haywood, Stirling Phillips, Lakesha Jennings, Rhonda Stephens, Maisha Goss-Johns, Gwen Hudson, and Katrice Yokely. Inside illustrations, clockwise from bottom left: Loretta Foreman, Gloria Todd, Rosalind Bennett, and Sally Understein.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Graduate School USA Participants Interview Top FDIC Executives

By CLAIRE BROLIN
School of Leadership Development, CU

Participants in the Graduate School, USA (GSUSA) external leadership development programs recently interviewed top FDIC executives at headquarters. The participants enjoyed hearing about the leadership journeys of Chairman Jelena McWilliams, Director Martin Gruenberg, and Deputy to the Chairman and Chief Financial Officer Steve App.

Executive interviews are a core requirement for participants in the GSUSA's four leadership development programs. The interviews give participants an opportunity to learn from executives as part of their long-term career planning and development, to gain insights about their individual developmental objectives, and to establish a professional developmental network.

The discussions were each one hour long, and every participant was able to ask questions and get one-on-one time with the executives.

Chairman McWilliams openly shared her decision-making process throughout her career and encouraged participants to find their path to leadership by taking positions that are “extraordinary, not necessarily a pay raise” as long as basic needs are supported, so they can find their true passion and best opportunities.

Chairman McWilliams openly shared her decision-making process throughout her career and encouraged participants to find their path to leadership by taking positions that are “extraordinary, not necessarily a pay raise” as long as basic needs are supported, so they can find their true passion and best opportunities.

Director Gruenberg counseled the group to “be prepared, pay careful attention to the views of others, and have principles in which you believe.”



2018 participants in External Leadership Development Programs sponsored by the Graduate School, USA, recently interviewed FDIC senior leaders, including Chairman McWilliams. From left: Bryan Wampler, Case Manager, RMS, San Francisco Regional Office (Executive Potential Program); Linda Berberian, Senior Attorney, Legal Division, Dallas Regional Office (Executive Potential Program); Tina Queen, Community Affairs Specialist, DCP, Headquarters (Executive Leadership Program); Kara Hamilton, Compliance Examiner, DCP, Springfield, Illinois, Field Office (Executive Leadership Program); Chairman McWilliams; Paola Diaz, Senior Community Affairs Specialist, DCP, Headquarters (Executive Potential Program); Demetra Tsipianitis, IT Specialist, DIT, Headquarters (Aspiring Leader Program); and Leo Madrid, Senior Capital Markets Specialist, DRR, Headquarters (Executive Potential Program). Not pictured (participated via phone): Linda Hubble Ku, Counsel, Legal Division, Headquarters (Executive Potential Program); Kalem Kopf, Senior Examiner, RMS, Chicago Regional Office (Executive Leadership Program); Linda Dixon-Shane, Secretary, Legal Division, Chicago Regional Office (Aspiring Leader Program); and Greg Goff, Examiner, RMS, Des Moines, Illinois, Field Office (Executive Leadership Program).

CFO App discussed leadership traits that he practices, including “listening to others, standing for something, flexibility, and proactive management of IT.”

It was an excellent opportunity for the participants, who got to hear the executives’ personal insights and professional tips, not to mention a few fun stories.

In 2018, FDIC employees participated in each of the GSUSA’s four executive developmental programs. Full-time, permanent employees with at least three years of FDIC service are eligible to apply to the programs. Each of the four programs is geared to a specific grade range, with the four programs together covering grades CG 4 to CM1.

- **The Aspiring Leader Program (ALP)** challenges participants to increase the capacity of their current leadership skills and abilities. It is a two-month program for CG 4-6 employees.
- **The New Leader Program (NLP)** provides a solid training and developmental foundation of leadership skills and team building for federal employees. It is a six-month program for CG 7-10 employees.
- **The Executive Leadership Program (ELP)** helps individuals who have little or no supervisory experience to acquire or enhance the competencies needed to become a successful supervisor, manager, and leader within the federal government. It is a nine-month program for CG 11-13 employees.
- **The Executive Potential Program (EPP)** develops senior-level public service employees who have demonstrated significant leadership potential into more effective leaders. It is a year-long program for CG 14-CM 1 employees and managers.

CU’s School of Leadership Development sponsors partnerships with the GSUSA; University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Harvard University; and Georgetown University for various developmental programs and sends approximately 24 FDIC employees and managers for external training each year. 🏠

FIELD NEWS

From the Field: The Diversity of You

By JAN PICKARD
Administrative Assistant
Eau Claire and Appleton,
Wisconsin, Field Offices

“If we know where we came from, we may better know where to go. If we know who we came from, we may better understand who we are.” – Anonymous.

The FDIC takes pride in its diverse workforce, made up of people of many different ethnicities and backgrounds joining together to carry out the duties and goals of the agency. Diversity training and events are a key part of continuing education for FDIC employees.

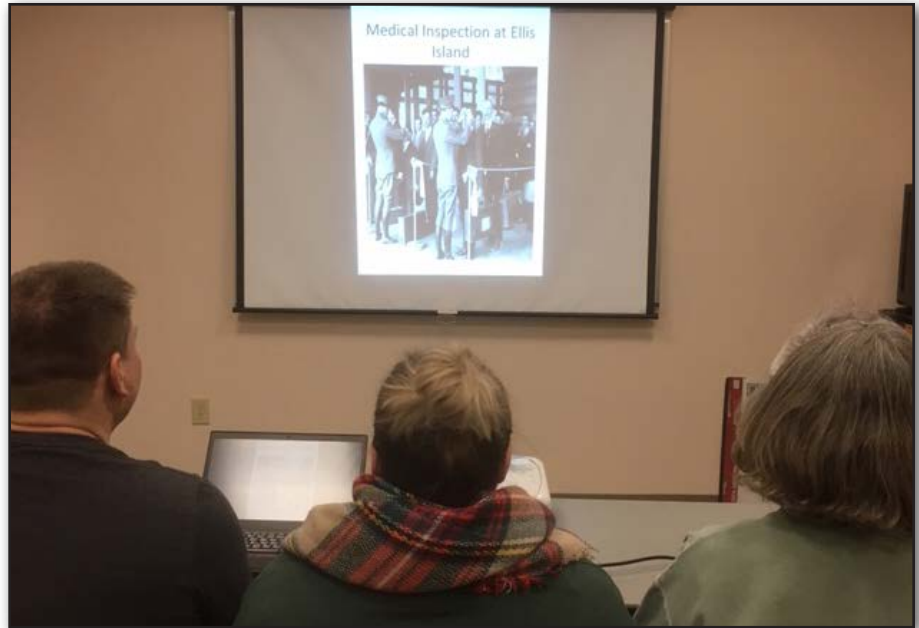
As the Administrative Assistant in the Eau Claire and Appleton, Wisconsin, Field Offices for the past few years, I have enjoyed the opportunity to seek out interesting and relevant topics for diversity events in our offices. In the past, we have enjoyed and learned a great deal from speakers representing the Oneida and Ojibwa Native American tribes and the Hmong people of Wisconsin.

However, for our 2018 diversity training, I wanted to create an event that encouraged co-workers to think about their own diversity in a genealogical sense. With the blessing and cooperation of the field supervisors and supervisory examiners in the offices, I developed a PowerPoint presentation entitled “The Diversity of You,” which focuses on the immigration and migration of our ancestors and the study of family heritage in general.

I thought it would be interesting to instill in my co-workers a curiosity about their own family backgrounds.

Therefore, several months prior to the presentations, I offered to do a little research into the genealogical background of any employees who were interested.

In November and December of 2018, I conducted three diversity training sessions for FDIC employees in the state of Wisconsin using my PowerPoint presentation. The program was designed to educate and stimulate employees to think about their own personal family



Employees in the Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Field Office watch Janice Pickard's PowerPoint presentation on “The Diversity of You.” From left: Eric Wiechert, DCP Examiner; Jess Klein, RMS Examiner; and Karen Sharp, DCP Senior Examiner.

heritage. My presentation consisted of a short introductory “quiz” on genealogy, a 90-slide program narrated by me that included some history of immigration to America, issues confronted by immigrant settlers, some of my own personal family history stories, research tips and techniques for conducting an ancestral search, and a question and comment session at the end.

I presented the program to Eau Claire RMS staff on November 20 in the Eau Claire Field Office, to all Wisconsin Territory DCP staff on December 4 at their quarterly meeting in Madison, and to Appleton RMS Field Office staff in Appleton on December 19.

Since the majority of Americans are immigrants of some sort—many of us descended from someone or several someones who migrated to America from somewhere else—the beginning of each of my presentations focused on immigration through Ellis Island and its predecessor, Castle Garden. I also covered the tragedies of war and epidemics and the effect each had on our ancestral history.

I consider myself an amateur genealogist and enjoy delving into the history

and background of my own family. I thought it would be interesting to instill in my co-workers a curiosity about their own family backgrounds. Therefore, several months prior to the presentations, I offered to do a little research into the genealogical background of any employees who were interested. They only needed to supply me with basic name, birthdate, and geographical information concerning their parents and grandparents. I guaranteed any information I discovered would not be used in the office presentation without their approval.

A few employees from each field office took me up on the offer, resulting in the discovery of some interesting family information. For instance, one examiner discovered that her eighth great-grandfather and former President Millard Fillmore's fifth great-grandfather were the same person! She also discovered a connection to both former President H.W. Bush and former President George W. Bush. For another examiner, the tale his grandfather told of an early ancestor changing the family surname shortly after arrival in

see *Diversity*, page 13, column 1

FIELD NEWS

Diversity, from page 12

America turned out to be quite likely true.

As part of my presentation, employees were given information to help them dig into their own family histories along with tools for creating family trees to share with their relatives. Unlike 20 years ago, when most information had to be discovered through legwork, today's genealogists can do a huge amount of family sleuthing in the comfort of their own homes by just using the internet. Many birth, death, and marriage records are available online at no cost. And, certified copies of these vital records can be requested from the applicable county clerk offices at minimal cost as well. Also, much information can be gleaned from online census records, military records, and church records, as well as archived books and cemetery records. Many libraries also have online searchable databases to assist in genealogical research. And, of course, you can also just "Google" an ancestor's name. You'll be surprised at how much information pops up!

Unlike 20 years ago, when most information had to be discovered through legwork, today's genealogists can do a huge amount of family sleuthing in the comfort of their own homes by just using the internet.

For those who might want to delve even further into their family history, I encouraged participants to embark on excursions to historical societies, museums, libraries, courthouses, and ceme-

teries. If you know where to look, they contain a goldmine of information on our ancestors. I included in my presentation some of my own cemetery finds, such as pictures of the gravestones of my Civil War and Revolutionary War ancestors, which I found through "cemetery road trips." Also included in the discussion on cemeteries were the meanings of some historical gravestone signage and, strangely enough, the humorous side of gravestone signage.

Currently, DNA testing for genealogical purposes is very popular. Since 90 percent of people who ever lived did not leave a traditional genealogical record, DNA is an opportunity to learn more about these ancestors. My presentation discussed how through DNA it can be determined if people have common origins. DNA testing can be very useful in genealogical research concerning adoptions and, as we have discovered from recent news reports, testing has also assisted in solving some high profile criminal cases. The ramifications and legalities of DNA test results were also discussed during my talks as well as during comment sessions with participants after the presentations.

Every participant was provided with handouts listing the various free and paid sites for genealogy research. Templates of Family Group Sheets and Pedigree Charts were also provided to assist them in their search. Since all the presentations were conducted in November and December, I encouraged participants to use the upcoming holiday gatherings of relatives as an opportunity to discuss and learn more about their own families.

Most of us are here today because our ancestors embarked on a new life in

America for reasons of their own—perhaps religious freedom, economic woes, or just a sense of adventure—or maybe they were forced to come to America and it wasn't their own choice. Whatever the reason, we at the FDIC are a diverse group made up of people from different backgrounds and different circumstances, means, experiences, and opportunities, but we all must live and work together toward common goals. That doesn't mean, however, that we need to abandon our own diversity. Instead, we can still hold those differences within ourselves. Many of our customs, foods, music, books, languages, and more, remain ingrained in our lives, making us who we are.

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One of the more common ways we celebrate our diversity is through our food. Therefore, at the end of each session, participants were treated to some tasty "heritage foods" of the area. Since many of the early settlers of the state of Wisconsin were of German, Norwegian, Swedish, and English descent, employees were given the opportunity to taste treats such as krumkaga, lefse, flat bread, almond cake, sandbakkels, rosettes, and, in one office, even bratwurst, as part of learning all about "The Diversity of You." 🍷

EMPLOYEE STORY

Life Outside the FDIC with Ronald Holloway

Motivational speaker and author inspires confidence inside and outside the FDIC.

By LAJUAN WILLIAMS-YOUNG
Office of Communications

“How can I help?” When your job involves training and development, emergency preparedness, and records and information management, this is a question you ask a lot. It conveys a sense of self-assuredness that is required for that job, and the man who holds that job at the FDIC possesses that important characteristic. Meet Ron Holloway, Management and Program Analyst in the Office of Inspector General, whose self-confidence and self-assuredness extends beyond helping people at the FDIC – to his personal pursuits as an author and motivator.

I find these profile pieces interesting because they showcase the many talents of FDIC employees. After writing a few of them, I am confident in saying that many of our colleagues at the FDIC are multi-talented. More than just interesting side notes, some might even argue that an individual’s personal pursuits allow them to develop skills that help them in their professional role at the FDIC, something the agency presumably benefits from.

Holloway also impacts his audiences and readers through stories about his single mom who sacrificed so much while raising him and his sister. Through her example, he coined the term “adversity is the achiever” to describe his own leadership style.

Holloway came to the FDIC in 2012; however, it is his outside activities that I’ll tell you about in this piece. Holloway is a motivational speaker and author who has spoken for numerous organizations and has written several books. His journey to this point in his life is quite interesting.

Motivational Speaker

Holloway volunteered for many years for local and national organizations that were representative of his values. One such organization asked him to introduce a prominent person during a volunteer event. “It was super nerve-racking, but

that was the beginning of numerous engagements where I introduced speakers. However, when I was approached about being the spokesperson for a high-profile organization, I said ‘no’ out of fear,” Holloway told me. Fortunately, that fear was short-lived, and his strategies to overcome it actually became a subject of his speeches. Since that first invitation, he has gone on to speak to many audiences about overcoming fear, drawing from his personal experiences.

Author

“I began writing on the advice of someone who told me that writing is very cathartic, and I found this to be true for me,” said Holloway. He was committed to journaling while he was in college and during his time in the military, and wrote his first book in 2014. He’s also written for other mediums as well. For example, he was offered a fellowship position as a writer for a popular nighttime talk/news satire program, but his passion ultimately took him down a different path. He’s written five books, to date, which are currently sold online.

“I’ve always believed in the arts because I believe they inspire and invoke curiosity,” Holloway said. As a kid in Milwaukee, he was exposed to the arts through an inner city program, which provided visits to the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and museums, where he developed a passion for the art world, and cultivated a desire to be immersed in it. He explained that one of the reasons he chose a liberal arts college and joined the Navy was to be exposed, more broadly, to experiences that would expand his access to the arts and the world.

His preference in literary authors also influences his writing. He is currently reading *Strength to Love* by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and up next is *Harlem is Nowhere* by Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts. The authors Holloway admires clearly resonate messages of positivity and optimism.

Holloway’s writing style uses his own personal journey to tell stories of hope. His books have gone viral in part because he uses humor to connect to his



Ron Holloway brings humor and a message to his motivational speeches and books.

audiences. The positive responses from his readers motivate him to continue sharing his personal experiences. “I think humor has the ability to disarm people, and I use it to talk about some pretty heavy social issues in my books,” he added. Holloway also impacts his audiences and readers through stories about his single mom who sacrificed so much while raising him and his sister. Through her example, he coined the term “adversity is the achiever” to describe his own leadership style.

Holloway’s formula for success is simple. As he puts it, “One thing my speaking and writing have in common with my work here at the FDIC is that I see them both as a ‘problem, cause and solution process,’ which is important in answering the question, ‘How can I add value?’”

Holloway’s work at the FDIC and his personal pursuits share a common skill set — communication, leadership, critical thinking, time management, teamwork, and the ability to work under pressure. Ron Holloway’s external passion as a motivational speaker and author helps inspire confidence inside and outside the FDIC.

Holloway said he still has so much more to do with his life. So when you see him, ask him about his plans for the next steps in his life. He may just inspire a dream in you or motivate you to dust off your dreams. ■

IN MEMORIAM

Robert W. Mooney

Former National Director for Minority and Community Development Banking, RMS

Robert W. Mooney, a former FDIC senior executive who dedicated his professional life to community development banking, consumer protection, and economic inclusion, died on January 2, 2019, in Washington, D.C. He was 68.

Mooney was highly regarded as a leader in his field and a pathfinder who initiated many FDIC programs that continue to this day. In his most recent role as National Director for Minority and Community Development Banking in RMS, Mooney led the FDIC's efforts to preserve and promote Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs) and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs).

Upon his retirement in 2015, the FDIC Board of Directors recognized Mooney for his "deep and unwavering commitment to promoting opportunities for institutions to meet the financial needs of underserved communities, ensure fair lending, and promote equal access to credit."

For his contributions, Mooney was also recognized by the National Bankers Association in October 2018 with a lifetime achievement award.

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Robert W. Mooney was born on February 23, 1950, in Waltham, Massachusetts, son of the late Robert P. and Agnes F. (Gormley) Mooney. He graduated from Saint Mary's High School in 1968 and earned a bachelor's degree from Brandeis University and a Master's in Business Administration from Boston University.

Mooney joined the FDIC in 1989 in the Burnsville, Minnesota, Office as a Liquidation Assistant. He subsequently became a Managing Agent for the Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC).

In 1991, Mooney was selected as one of the FDIC's original Community Affairs Officers, a key role in the agency's new Community Affairs Program, which Mooney helped develop. He also served as a Fair Lending Specialist and Senior Fair Lending Specialist before going on to senior roles overseeing compliance, the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), and fair lending policy and examinations.

In October 2007, Mooney was named Senior Advisor for Consumer Protection. He supported Chairman Sheila C. Bair and later served in a similar capacity advising then-Chairman Martin J. Gruenberg (now Director Gruenberg). Among his achievements were enhancing financial literacy programs; expanding the Money Smart program to serve new audiences, including youth, small businesses, and non-English speaking populations; and protecting homeowners from abusive foreclosures during the most recent banking crisis.

Mooney worked closely with then-Acting Chairman Gruenberg to create the Alliance for Economic Inclusion, a national initiative to establish broad-based coalitions of financial institutions, community-based organizations, and other partners to bring unbanked and underserved populations into the financial mainstream.

During the financial crisis years, Mooney, as Deputy Director, promoted public confidence and stability in the U.S. banking system by responding rapidly to consumer complaints and inquiries and mobilizing outreach and education on deposit insurance coverage to consumers and bankers.

When he was named National Director of Minority and Community Development Banking in 2012, Mooney went about establishing a high-caliber program that has earned praise and respect in the industry. Also earning industry praise was a research study he commissioned, *Minority Depository Institutions: Structure, Performance, and Social Impact*, describing the important role that minority depository institutions serve in the banking industry.

As the FDIC Board of Directors noted, throughout his career, Mooney developed genuine relationships with community and consumer groups, bankers, industry stakeholders, and government



Mooney dedicated his professional life to community development banking, consumer protection, and economic inclusion, before, during, and after his FDIC tenure.

officials. He was known for his devotion to social justice and for his exceptional efforts to lift up those who may be economically or socially disadvantaged.

Before joining the FDIC, Mooney held several executive positions in the banking industry and was active in civic affairs, serving on the boards of directors and as President or Treasurer of several community development corporations. He was awarded a Commendation by the Massachusetts State Senate for his work in community development and equal opportunity.

After he retired from the FDIC in 2015, Mooney founded Mooney and Associates, LLC, a consulting firm that included several minority banks among its clients. In early 2018, he became a director at Carver Bancorp, Inc., the holding company for Carver Federal Savings Bank, a federally chartered stock savings bank that serves African-American communities whose residents, businesses, and institutions have limited access to mainstream financial services. Michael T. Pugh, President and CEO of Carver Bancorp, Inc., said of Mooney: "During his time as a director, Robert provided our Board with an expanded view on how best to meet the banking needs of low- to moderate-income [LMI] communities. He will be remembered as an industry leader who tirelessly promoted consumer protection and economic inclusion."

see Mooney, page 16, column 1

IN MEMORIAM

Mooney, from page 15

Aside from work, Mooney enjoyed traveling, *CNN* broadcasts, and time spent in New York City.

Survivors include siblings Arlene Gordon (Stephen) and Richard Gannon (Carol); many nieces and nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews; and many colleagues and friends.

Several of Mooney's FDIC colleagues and his sister shared their thoughts and recollections.

Director Gruenberg said of Mooney: "During Bob's twenty-six-plus year career at the FDIC, he made fundamental and defining contributions to the agency's responsibilities in the areas of community affairs, community development, fair lending, consumer protection, and Minority Depository Institutions. He brought both passion and deep knowledge and expertise to his work, and became a nationally recognized expert in his field. In a series of progressively senior positions as Assistant, Associate, and Deputy Director in our Consumer Protection Division, and as National Director for Minority and Community Development Banking, Bob left a legacy of extraordinary service to the FDIC and our country."

RMS Director Doreen Eberley said: "I cherish my memories of the time I had working with Bob. He was incredibly knowledgeable, had a fun sense of humor, and was tremendously dedicated to the success of minority and community development financial institutions. As a true public servant, Bob was a role model for us all. He will be missed by so many who called him both a colleague and friend."

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"Bob's friends and colleagues will miss

his compassion for people, commitment to social justice, engaging storytelling, and sharp wit," said Betty Rudolph, Mooney's successor as National Director of Minority and Community Development Banking.

Rae-Ann Miller, Associate Director, Risk Management, RMS, said: "Bob was so knowledgeable and so devoted to economic inclusion, and he was also funny and warm. I worked very closely with him for a number of years, and my fondest memory of him was when he was a speaker, he would always start with, 'Wow, what a good-looking crowd!'"

Eloy Villafranca, Dallas Regional Manager, Community Affairs Branch, DCP, said: "Bob Mooney was a pioneer. From his early days starting the Neighborhood Housing Services in Massachusetts to his support and championing of what was to become the FDIC's initial discrimination testing to his supporting the progress of Minority Institutions, Bob made the issues visible and relevant. His passion for the unbanked and underserved was paramount in his drive to make financial services available to those who had historically been underserved or not served at all. As the original Community Affairs Officer in Chicago, he was part of the team that outlined and memorialized what working with communities for bankers entailed. He was unafraid and out front. He was a hero to so many who may have never met him. His passion lives in those who continue to fight for the impoverished, the ignored, and the underserved. May he rest in peace."

Sandra Thompson, former Director of the former Division of Supervision and Consumer Protection, said: "Bob was an intelligent, bright, and witty person who devoted his life to working for and with the underserved. He had an extraordinary sense of humor and was generous to a fault. Bob and I worked closely together, and I relied heavily on him to oversee the consumer protection, CRA, and Community Affairs programs during the most recent crisis, when he worked tirelessly to help restore consumer confidence in the banking system. After the crisis, he ably led the efforts for the FDIC's minority bank program, where he was a huge help in promoting the economic viability and sustainability



"During Bob's twenty-six-plus year career at the FDIC, he made fundamental and defining contributions to the agency's responsibilities in the areas of community affairs, community development, fair lending, consumer protection, and Minority Depository Institutions," said Director Martin Gruenberg.

of minority and underserved communities. Bob was creative and had a strong sense of doing what was right and fair; he had a common-sense approach to policy development and always took into consideration the impact of policy proposals on LMI borrowers and depositors. Bob was a great person, he was a dear friend, and I will miss him so very much."

Former DCP Deputy Director Donna Gambrell said: "Bob and I started our careers at FDIC as part of the first group of Community Affairs Officers. He was a strong advocate for economic justice. There are too many stories that I could tell—most of them funny, and some I can't repeat. I'll miss him."

Arlene Gordon, Mooney's sister, said: "I am so grateful that Bobby's FDIC colleagues and friends all cared so deeply for him and that we got to know how very special and committed he was to whatever he was doing. I think of all of you as 'Bobby's Washington Family.' My family and I are finding comfort in a quote by Denzel Washington, a quote that almost seems written for Bobby, and I wish to share it with you in the hope that you will be also comforted:

'At the end it's not about what you have or even what you've accomplished. It's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better. It's about what you've given back.'" 🏠

TRANSITIONS



Neeta Allagh

Neeta Allagh was recently selected as the Chief of the Publications and IT Operations Section (PITOS), DIR.

Allagh has more than eight years of experience with the FDIC and most recently served as a Senior IT Specialist in the Software Engineering Support and Web Technologies Section in DIT. In this role, she led the migration of the fdic.gov website to cloud.gov as well as the implementation of the Application Lifecycle Management program, the enterprise Service Oriented Architecture program, and the CQ-Web Content Management System. She also participated in the contract

award process for numerous procurement initiatives, served as a technical monitor, and managed budgets for IT resources. In October 2018, she completed a detail as the Acting Chief of PITOS.

Allagh has a bachelor of science degree from Pune University, Maharashtra, India, where she majored in chemistry with a minor in computer science and mathematics. She also holds Project Management Professional and Professional Scrum Master certificates. 🏠



Sherryann Nelson

Sherryann Nelson was selected as Regional Ombudsman for the New York Regional Office, effective November 26, 2018. Her new responsibilities are to conduct outreach activities with bankers, representatives from trade associations, and state banking commissioners within the New York Region, facilitate communication, and provide problem resolution and inquiry services.

Nelson explained her interest in the Office of the Ombudsman (OO). “Broadening my perspective has been very important to me throughout my career, which is why I have taken advantage of working in various offices and divisions at the FDIC. In the Division of Risk Management Supervision [RMS], I developed

critical competencies that prepared me for continued professional growth. Crossing over to OO allows me to continue using these competencies, broaden my perspective, and build new skills. I find that exciting, challenging, and a continuation of my career advancement! I appreciate the opportunities the FDIC creates by cross-training its employees and enabling them to build careers while navigating throughout the Corporation. It’s why the FDIC is the best place to work.”

Nelson has served in the New York Region for 30 years, as a Financial Institutions Examiner for 11 years and a Case Manager for the past 19 years. While serving as a Case Manager, she was the FDIC primary contact for banking organizations with total assets up to \$40 billion. She has reviewed numerous Reports of Examination of complex and problem banks, processed a wide variety of applications, assessed bank compliance with enforcement actions, and completed assignments involving fraud and appeals of supervisory determinations. She has also participated in the Large Institutions Depository Insurance Program.

Nelson has held many leadership roles throughout her career, including serving as Acting RMS Assistant Regional Director, Acting DCP Field Supervisor, RMS Supervisory Examiner, and Chief of the Corporate Employee Program.

She was Assistant Program Coordinator for Workplace Excellence and the Labor Management Forum, participated in the Aspiration Workstream for the Workforce Development Initiative, and served as the New York Regional CDAC (Chairman’s Diversity Advisory Council) Chair. Additionally, she has participated in several assignments with the Financial Services Volunteer Corps, where she provided training to bankers and regulators from Egypt and Albania.

Her new responsibilities are to conduct outreach activities with bankers, representatives from trade associations, and state banking commissioners within the New York Region, facilitate communication, and provide problem resolution and inquiry services.

Nelson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance, with a minor in Economics from C.W. Post, Long Island University. She is a graduate of the Graduate School of Banking - Stonier at Georgetown University (2006) and the FDIC’s Executive Potential Program (EPP) (2012), where she was selected as one of the EPP’s Graduation Class Speakers. 🏠