

# FDIC News

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Employee Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2023

Community Affairs Specialist  
Participates in “Giving Circle” to  
Help Young Black Women and Girls 1

DOA Contracting Officer to Coach  
Peruvian Women’s National  
Lacrosse Team 3

Moving On 5

In Memoriam 6

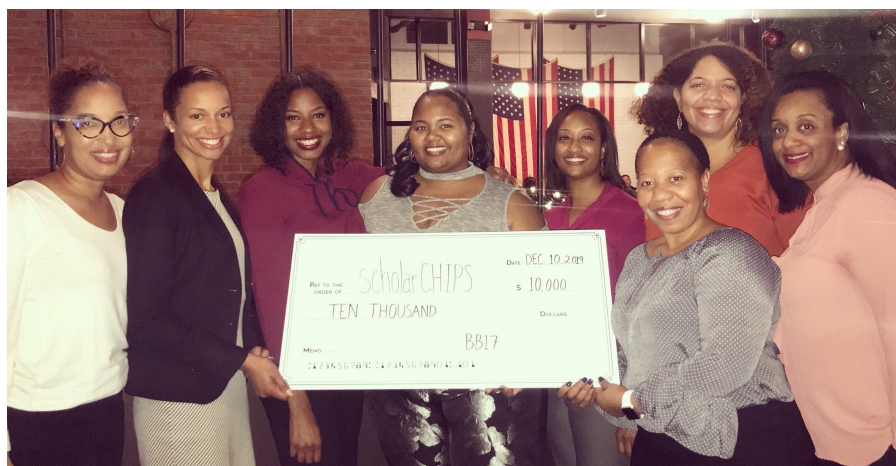
## Community Affairs Specialist Participates in “Giving Circle” to Help Young Black Women and Girls

By Sonya Weakley  
Writer, Office of Communications

Mia Sowell was not familiar with “giving circles” and how they help others before she joined one. Since 2017, she has been part of a small group of Black women in Washington who have personally

contributed \$57,300 to Washington-based nonprofit organizations.

“Basically a giving circle is a group of people who come together and find a common cause that they would like to



Mia Sowell, fifth from left, participates in an event recognizing ScholarCHIPS as one of the Bridges Beyond 17 Giving Circle’s grantees.

see “Giving Circle,” page 2

The *FDIC News* is published monthly by the Office of Communications (OCOM) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), 550 17th Street N.W., Room 7102 Washington, DC 20429  
Martin J. Gruenberg, Acting Chairman, FDIC  
David Barr, Deputy Director, OCOM  
Sonya Weakley, Writer/Editor, OCOM  
Inam Hyder, Internal Communications Strategist, OCOM  
Alison Maynard, Designer, OCOM

### FDIC News Editorial Board:

#### HEADQUARTERS

Clayton Boyce, DIR, CBoyce@FDIC.gov  
Cheryl Hayman, Office of the Internal Ombudsman, CHayman@FDIC.gov  
Greg King, DOF, GregKing@FDIC.gov  
Heather Woods, OCOM, HeWoods@FDIC.gov  
Lauren Breitenother, CIOO, LBreitenother@FDIC.gov  
Ike Jones, OLA, WilJones@FDIC.gov  
Marva Vincent, OMWI, MaVincent@FDIC.gov  
Monica Lopez, DOF, MLopez@FDIC.gov  
Robyn Poole, DOA, RPoole@FDIC.gov  
Sharon Tushin, OIG, STushin@FDIC.OIG.gov  
Beth Wiggins, CU, BeWiggins@FDIC.gov

### REGIONS

#### Chicago

Emery Wilson, RMS, EmWilson@FDIC.gov

#### Dallas

Tyler Cavaness, DRR, TCavaness@FDIC.gov

#### Kansas City

Amy Mark, RMS, AmMark@FDIC.gov

#### San Francisco

Karen Hammer, RMS, KHammer@FDIC.gov

Laura Rapp, RMS, LRapp@FDIC.gov

Luke Reynolds, DCP, LuReynolds@FDIC.gov

---

## **“Giving Circle,”** *from page 1*

support and donate to, and we donate our personal money,” Sowell said.

Her circle, which is called Bridges Beyond 17, originally set a goal of making an award to an organization that focuses on the needs of Black girls and young women in the Washington area. Since then, the circle has made grants to eight organizations that meet its criteria.

The group came together after one of Sowell’s friends had learned about a 17-year-old girl who was killed in a random, drive-by shooting while waiting at a bus stop.

“She had everything going for her. She was a graduating senior. She was on her way to college in Florida to start the next chapter of her life,” Sowell said. “This event was a wakeup call that now is the time to do more.”

The friend reached out to her network of friends and others who shared an interest in community service, and the Bridges Beyond 17 Giving Circle was born.

Sowell, a Senior Community Affairs Specialist in the Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection, said the circle’s name was partly inspired by the age of the girl but also by the fact that 17 is an age beyond which certain services and assistance are more difficult to find, and that the circle had 17 founding members.

During the past few years, the group has focused on organizations that break the school-to-prison pipeline among young Black girls ranging in age from middle school to high school.

“Some of those organizations might offer certain after-school programs, or they may also offer services related to protection from dangerous environments, or sexual health and awareness.”

During the pandemic, the circle shifted slightly to assist groups that focused on education loss that occurred in some households when schools were closed. “So many students were at home and may not have had the same support they would receive in the classroom, and learning loss occurred.”

From the beginning, the group wanted to support local organizations that focused on advocacy or programming

to make a positive impact on the lives of Black girls or young Black women, Sowell said.

To find organizations that fit their criteria, the circle members, currently numbering 19, conducted their own research and outreach, finding groups through personal contacts and internet searches to learn more about the organizations, who they serve, and who their leaders are.

“We would find out what their needs are, what their challenges are and if there is a way that a \$10,000 grant could assist them in helping Black girls or young women get assistance or receive certain services.”

The circle invited the organizations, and in some cases those who benefited from their services, to come speak to the circle members to help them learn about needs and ways to help.

The circle wants to remain relatively small, limiting membership to no more than 23. “We want it to continue to be intimate. It’s also a way for us to network amongst each other, so it is a relatively casual format.”

One of the organizations the circle has supported focuses on rights for women and children who are victims of sex trafficking, while another focuses on trying to get local laws changed to provide more services for the victims. Another organization, called ScholarCHIPS, provides scholarships for children of incarcerated parents.

The circle makes it clear to the applying organizations that the members are interested in staying in touch and seeing how their grants are used. In the case of ScholarCHIPS, the circle has been able to follow a young woman who received funding for college.

“We’ve been able to keep up with what ScholarCHIPS is doing and how they’re continuing to impact lives,” Sowell said. “We have seen a couple of our other grantees grow and receive substantial grants from philanthropic organizations that provide more structured financial and technical assistance, so that is all very great to see.”



**Senior Community Affairs Specialist Mia Sowell says it’s important to know what you want to achieve when starting a giving circle.**

Another, called Black Girl Tribe, focuses on cultivating relationships and building sisterhood. “Shortly after we made our first award to them, they informed us they had received a pretty significant donation from Nike, so that was exciting.”

The circle has contracted with a third-party nonprofit organization, called [Grapevine](#), which acts as a fiscal administrator for several giving circles around the country. It collects donations from the circle and any outside donors and distributes them based on the group’s wishes.

“All of our donations go through them. [Members] interested in receiving a tax deduction are able to do that. It also documents donation history, which is helpful when seeking matching gifts,” Sowell said.

The circle also has a grant application that organizations seeking funding must complete to verify their nonprofit status and stability.

“Most of our organizations are smaller in nature. Some of them are also completely staffed by volunteers, and they are all also led by Black women.”

The circle recognizes that a \$10,000 grant may not make a huge impact on a national organization or even a larger local one, but for smaller organizations that are just getting started or are volunteer-based, \$10,000 makes a big difference, Sowell said.

---

see **“Giving Circle,”** *page 3*

---

## “Giving Circle,” *from page 2*

Since its founding in 2017, the Bridges Beyond 17 Giving Circle has made the following donations, totaling \$57,300:

- 2018: \$10,000 to Rights4Girls; \$900 to FAIR Girls; \$900 to ScholarCHIPS
- 2019: \$10,000 to ScholarCHIPS
- 2020: \$2,500 to Wanda Alston House (COVID grant); \$5,000 to Goal Grinders (Year 1 of 2); \$5,000 to The Black Girl Tribe (Year 1 of 2)
- 2021: \$5,000 to Goal Grinders (Year 2 of 2); \$5,000 to The Black Girl Tribe (Year 2 of 2)

- 2022: \$10,000 to Black Girls Can; \$3,000 to Black Swan Academy

For anyone considering starting a giving circle, Sowell said the first step is to identify the cause they want to support and how they intend to do that, and “if you are interested in collecting money from people then you need to be able to articulate what it is that you hope to achieve.”

At first that may not be etched in stone, she said. “It was not with us, but in our initial six months of gathering and meeting, we identified the focus areas that we wanted to support, so that could then

lead us to identifying the types of organizations that we would support.”

It is important then to determine if the group will have a fiscal administrator or what the group is comfortable with in terms of collecting money. “Since we’re not a [nonprofit], we think the intermediary is a great way to have that confidence that our money is being collected and monitored.”

In addition, “you need a trusted leader and to determine the level of commitment that will be expected from the group and for everyone to be on the same page.” 🏠

## DOA Contracting Officer to Coach Peruvian Women’s National Lacrosse Team

By Sonya Weakley  
Writer, Office of Communications

---



Nicholle Harris Depaz plans to help bring lacrosse to the Olympics through adding Peru to the list of countries with a national women’s lacrosse team.

This past fall Nicholle Harris Depaz combined her love for the game of lacrosse with her Peruvian heritage and accepted the role of head coach of the Peru Women’s National Lacrosse team. A contracting officer in the Acquisition Service Branch of the Division of Administration, Depaz has played and coached women’s lacrosse since her sophomore year at Marshall High School in Fairfax County, Virginia, where she graduated in 2003 and coached for 15 years after playing in college.

In the fall, she applied for the Peruvian women’s team coaching role when the Peru men’s team, which formed in 2018, put out a national search for players and a coach for a women’s team.

“I have the opportunity to represent Team Peru as a thank you to my family who took care of me here in the United States and support the sport I love so much that has been trying to get to the Olympic stage,” she said. “Bringing another South American country into the

---

see **Lacrosse Coach**, page 4



---

## Lacrosse Coach, from page 3

mix will bring the sport one step closer to those Olympics dreams.”

In 2021, the International Olympic Committee recognized World Lacrosse, the international governing body of the sport, as a member organization, setting up lacrosse for international competition and moving it closer to becoming an Olympic sport. And in 2021, the Pan American Lacrosse Association was founded to host tournaments for countries in the Americas and the

to subsidize their travel expenses, and to have uniforms,” she said.

### A TEACHER’S SUGGESTION

Depaz started playing lacrosse as a sophomore in high school after years of running track. She had tried out for soccer and was cut, and one of her teachers mentioned lacrosse. She tried it and loved it from the start. Her team at Marshall was not top notch, but it didn’t stop her from getting better.



Depaz coached the Marshall High School (Fairfax County, Virginia) girls’ lacrosse team for 15 years after playing in college.

Caribbean. Depaz plans to take the Peru team to the PALA 2023 tournament in August and September.

In recognizing World Lacrosse, the IOC accepted a new version of the sport. Traditionally lacrosse has 12 players on a team. The World Lacrosse organization proposed a sport called Lacrosse Sixes, a six-on-six game, played on a smaller field and requiring smaller teams. Countries that had difficulty fielding the required 18 to 20 players for a 12-player match gained the opportunity to field smaller teams.

Once she was named coach, Depaz began contacting her network of former players from her years of college play to fill out her staff of assistants and is working on getting the players set up to come to Washington to practice. “We’re in fundraising mode now so that we can have opportunities to bring girls to practice,

Unable to afford to play on expensive travel teams, she found a group of post-collegiate women who played pick-up games in the area, and she joined those games to get in extra practice. A year later she committed as a high school senior to play for Old Dominion University upon graduation.

Her dream, however, was to attend Virginia Tech for engineering, so after two years at ODU, she transferred to Tech and joined the varsity team as a walk-on, excited to play for some of the game’s best coaches. During the summer after her junior year, she played in Australia’s STX league, returning to Tech to play on the school’s club team her senior year.

“I was so thankful after only playing lacrosse for a few years that I had the opportunity to play for some of the best college coaches. Every day in college play I thought to myself, I don’t know why I’m

here, pinch me I’m in a dream, but I’m doing it somehow.”

Depaz’s family left Peru in the 1980s to escape guerilla warfare and settled in Falls Church, where she was born and grew up with her grandparents, who worked at a hotel across the street from where they lived. Her family was not in favor of her playing sports because money was tight, so they wanted her to have a job or study. At first she had to hide her lacrosse stick by popping it through the window.

### FROM COLLEGE TO COACH

As a player, she kept a notebook of her favorite drills and plays, which she called her little coaches book in anticipation of being a coach someday. She returned to Marshall High School as assistant coach in 2008. “I thought if this girl from Falls Church, Virginia, who had no travel team experience, can do it, maybe I can help other area girls do the same.”

They had one win in 2009. She became the head coach in 2010, “and we never looked back. We were 7-7 my first year, and we were back-to-back state champion runners-up in 2016 and 2017.”

She was head coach for eight years, then returned to assistant coach, finally retiring last year. In 2015, she received a plaque from Marshall for becoming the “Winningest Coach” in the program’s history. In 2016, she coached while getting her MBA from Tech, where she had switched from engineering to finance and marketing as an undergraduate.

When she was head coach at Marshall, she started her own travel team, called DC LAX, to offer affordable travel and post-collegiate playing opportunities.

“To be a good lacrosse player it’s not just picking up a stick every March, it’s picking up a stick all year long, which is what a travel team does for you, so in 2013, I knew I had to build a travel team to be able to coach my girls all year long,” and she still operates the organization.

“We’ve been \$300 a season since 2013 and we’ve never changed our price, and we’ve offered about 10 scholarships a year. We also have a U.S. Lacrosse

---

see **Lacrosse Coach**, page 5

---

## Lacrosse Coach, from page 4

equipment grant to bring sticks for the community to try out the sport.”

### OLYMPIC DREAMS

This year, Depaz plans to take 12 players to PALA. Women who are eligible to hold Peruvian passports can play on the team, and currently all the players live in the U.S., though they are spread out across the country, in Texas, Florida and New York, with several in the D.C.-Baltimore area.

“We’re in a position where we’re rising up. We’re hoping to go to the

Pan-American games, which are every two years. If we play in the Pan-American games, we could be eligible for the World Games, and then we could be eligible for Olympic play,” she said.

The team’s mission is to bring the sport to Peru, and she is considering reaching out to women on Peru’s national track team, remembering how she had moved to the sport from running track. “I think it’s much harder to teach someone the speed you need in this game than it is to catch and throw.”

At the FDIC, Depaz is responsible for awarding many of the facility and construction procurements. She has been at the FDIC since 2020, having worked in federal government for 15 years, with prior work for the Marine Corps, the Department of Labor and the Navy.

She coaches after regular work hours. “The position is volunteer based. As we are a national team, I often work at 9 pm after putting little ones to sleep and on weekends.” 🏠

---

## Moving On

**Name:** Robert “Bob” McGibbon

**Most recent position:** Field Supervisor

**Division:** Division of Risk Management Supervision (RMS)

**Location:** Los Angeles Territory, Los Angeles, CA

**When and where joined the FDIC:** I joined the FDIC in 1988 as a field assistant examiner in the Sacramento, CA, field office.

**Other experience:** First real job after graduating from college.

**Career highlights:** I was promoted to a Case Manager in the FDIC’s San Francisco Regional Office in 1996. At that time, I was responsible for supervising banks in the Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Salt Lake City territories. In 2001, I was appointed Field Supervisor of the Billings, MT, Field Office and subsequently became the Field Supervisor in the Los Angeles Territory in 2002. As the Field Supervisor in Los Angeles, I managed two offices that supervise banks in Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, as well as along the Central California Coast. These two offices are now in process of merging into one. I was recognized as the San Francisco Region’s Corporate Manager of the Year in 2012 and also served on the Field Supervisor Council from 2016 to 2018, which included Chairman in 2018. Over my career, I have worked on numerous projects in the San Francisco Region and the FDIC’s Washington Office

including serving as Special Assistant to the Risk Management Division Director and participating on projects to improve the FDIC’s processes. I have also regularly led the San Francisco Region’s directors’ college initiatives since 2006—educating bankers throughout the Region on various regulatory matters. One of my favorite projects was planning the 2011 San Francisco Region’s Training Conference. I led a group of very dedicated examiners, supervisors, and administrative support staff – they were an amazing team!

The FDIC enabled me to travel and see different parts of the country during challenging times within the banking industry. This includes exam work throughout the San Francisco Region, including Guam and Hawaii.

**Retirement Date:** February 25, 2023

**Plans for retirement:** I intend to continue traveling the world (not a surprise to those that know me). I’m also going to keep busy with some part time work. I will get married later this year.

**Comments and thoughts:** I feel very blessed to have joined the FDIC right out of college. It’s an amazing government agency where employees are dedicated to the mission. In RMS, where I have spent all of my career, there really is a sense of purpose in what we do every day. There are always new things to learn which keeps the job fresh. There are opportunities to expand your horizons. And, there



Robert “Bob” McGibbon

are always awesome people to work with wherever you go.

One thing I tell newer employees is that it would be so much easier if we just called every bank a “1” and never took exception to what bankers do in running their financial institution. But, that is just not the way examiners work. We believe in the mission of maintaining public confidence in the banking system: We call it as we see it. We ask tough questions. We have difficult conversations. We make needed recommendations. We examine.

I am so proud to be part of an agency that makes a difference. I will certainly miss it. 🏠

# In Memoriam

## Joe Jennings

*Former Chief, Automation Section, RMS*

Joe Jennings passed away Thursday, October 13, 2022 surrounded by his immediate family, including his wife of over 51 years and the love of his life, Yvonne.

Joe met Yvonne in 1968. They married in November 1970 and moved to Northern Virginia in 1973. Their first son, Patrick, was born in 1974. Their second son, Scott, arrived two years later. When they were growing up, Joe coached their basketball and baseball teams and attended all their games and track meets.

Born on March 19, 1941, he was the only son of Jane and Francis Jennings of Sayre, PA. Joe grew up in Sayre and graduated from Sayre High School in 1958, where he played in the school band and a band of his own, the "Eighteens." After graduating from Bloomsburg University in 1962 with B.A., Joe began what would become a 40-year career with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Joe temporarily left the FDIC for a two-year stint in the U.S. Army in 1964, before transitioning to the Army Reserve. He graduated from Officer Candidate School, earned his Jump Wings, and became a first lieutenant. Joe returned to the FDIC in 1966 in St. Louis, MO. He was promoted to be Chief of the FDIC's Automation Section in 1979. Joe was universally respected for his expertise and his calm and deliberate manner. Joe was a friend to many at the FDIC and was respected for his professionalism.

Joe's FDIC colleagues in RMS had much to say about his life and work:

Martin Henning, Deputy Director, RMS, writes "Joe Jennings encouraged innovation to help us achieve the FDIC mission before that word was popular. He was my first IT project supervisor (the ALERT project), and a very encouraging one at that. Although he worked in FDIC headquarters for an extended period, he ensured none of us lost sight of the environment in which examiners work on the front lines. Solutions needed to be practical and work for the average examiner. He was truly ahead of his time, and leaves a rich legacy of many he mentored and led."

Edward Christovich, former Chief of DIR's Data Collection and Analysis Section, DIR (retired), writes "As Chief of the DOS Automation Section for many years, Joe managed a team that was responsible for supporting the technology needs of the FDIC's bank examiners. He was at the forefront of the FDIC's adoption of personal computers and development of automated systems to support the examination and supervision of the nation's banks. It was really quite remarkable for him to oversee the technological transformation that took place from the time that every bank examiner was assigned a typewriter to carry around in the trunk of their car to getting "portable" computers that weighed about 40 pounds (!) to actual laptop computers. We take it all so for granted now, but Joe's leadership quite literally changed the landscape of bank examinations. Joe was universally respected for his expertise but even more so for his calm and deliberate manner. He was a great boss, a great mentor, and a dear friend. May he rest in peace."

Penny Sicilia, Information Management Analyst, RMS, writes "Joe was a genuine, kind-hearted, caring gentleman. I was privileged to work with him and call him a friend. Joe always had a smile, kind words, and helpful demeanor. He was a gracious friend and mentor who helped me navigate the early years of my career. After his retirement, we kept in touch sharing life events and good ol' days stories. He was respected by his colleagues and will be missed by his FDIC family. The world and FDIC were better places because of Joe! I'm sure you will hear similar things from many others."

Mark Burks, Examination Specialist (Automation/Information), RMS, writes "Joe was the best at cutting through the bureaucracy and red tape and getting to the heart of the matter. If something needed to get done, but there were road blocks in the way, Joe would almost always find a way. He was slow to anger, and had a sneaky sense of humor. I learned a lot from Joe and respected him greatly. My condolences to the family."

Steve Callendar (retired) writes "Joe was a really good manager—he was smart, committed and supportive. He was always



Joe Jennings

willing to let the Automation Section team develop creative solutions to the division's IT needs. Whether it was an enhancement to an existing application or a completely new system, he gave us lots of latitude. But most of all I'll remember him for being a good person who I am glad to have had the opportunity to know and work with."

Besides his family and career, Joe's two passions in life were photography and auto racing. He saw his first car race as a small child and became instantly hooked. When he lived in St. Louis, Joe covered races all over the Midwest, including the Indy 500, for various publications. When he moved to Northern Virginia, he started covering open wheel, stock car, and sports car races up and down the East Coast. Joe was a member of the Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association, the National Motors Press Association, and the Eastern Motorsports Press Association. He won awards for writing and photography from all three organizations.

Joe and Yvonne travelled extensively together, visiting most state capitals and national parks. Later in life, Joe enjoyed spending time with this grandkids, Hunter and Logan.

Joe his survived by Yvonne, Patrick and his wife Deirdre, Scott and his wife Lauren, and grandsons Hunter and Logan. 🙏



# In Memoriam, *cont.*

---

## **Todd A. Schotanus**

*Former Senior IT Security Specialist, DIT*

Todd A. Schotanus, 61, of Libertyville, IL passed away suddenly on Wednesday, November 23, 2022.

Todd was born on June 3, 1961 in Libertyville. He was a 1979 graduate of Libertyville High School and a 1984 graduate of Illinois State University.

Todd began his career at the FDIC in June 1984, where he worked with the Division of Liquidation currently known as Division of Resolutions and Receiverships (DRR). He worked in the Costa Mesa liquidation site, the San Francisco Regional Office and the Washington Office. He spent most of his time with the FDIC in DIT as a Senior IT Security Specialist. He retired in 2017 from the FDIC in Washington D.C. after 33 years of service.

Todd's last supervisor Brian Seborg, Senior Enterprise Architect, ADS/ESB/DIT writes, "Todd is remembered as being a

consummate professional and was the person responsible for coordinating the FDIC FISMA reporting during his time at FDIC. He always had time to talk to and help others and especially enjoyed talking with the children of colleagues who often gravitated to his office when they came in for events like "Bring your Child to Work." Todd had a special knack for being a good listener and made others who talked with him feel important, especially children. Todd will be greatly missed and clearly left this earth too soon."

Surviving are his three siblings, Brad (Kathy) Schotanus, Reed Schotanus, and Janie (Kevin) Mooney; three nieces, Deidre, Nichole, and Michaela; and one nephew, Lucas.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Ila Jane (nee Vanderspool) in 2016, his father, Nicholas in 2020, and his nephew, Quinn Mooney in 2020.

Services were private for the family. 🏠



**Todd A. Schotanus**