



A News Brief from Your Board of Directors

November 21, 2014



Introducing Adelle Lees, ACIV's New Program Manager

The Board is delighted to welcome ACIV's new Program Manager, Adelle Lees, who officially joined us at the beginning of November. An Albuquerque native, Adelle has recently returned to New Mexico after living, studying, and working in the United Kingdom, Slovakia, and Indonesia. In addition to extensive volunteer and project management experience, Adelle earned her "Green Belt" in quality process improvement and lean management while working at AT&T. Adelle holds a B.S. in Business Administration with an emphasis in management from the City University of Seattle in Bratislava, Slovakia.

We sat down with Adelle recently to get her perspective on her experiences living abroad and on the important role she will be playing to help move the ACIV into the future...

Q - Adelle, first of all, welcome to the ACIV! You have lived, studied, worked, and volunteered abroad, in three different countries, in very diverse parts of the world. What drew you to these places?

A - Simply, adventure drew me to all three. But I followed my dream to the UK, satisfied my curiosity in Slovakia and pushed all my boundaries in Indonesia.

Q - You clearly are intrigued by other countries and cultures. What was one of your most memorable learning experiences when you lived abroad?

A - Do what makes you happy even if it is terribly hard to break away from something that “feels” safe. That break can be one of the most liberating experiences one has in a lifetime.

Q - You grew up in Albuquerque, and after all of these marvelous experiences around the world, you returned. What about New Mexico drew you back?

A - I was drawn back for both personal and professional reasons. I missed my family after being away for many years and felt that it was time to be closer to home. Professionally, I felt that I had more opportunities to grow here in America and I couldn't have been more spot-on. The opportunity at ACIV is perfectly suited to my background and my professional development.

ACIV Board of Directors

Executive Committee Members:
(Elected at the annual membership meeting on September 28, 2014)

Sandy Steen - President
Lisa Marbury - Vice President
Carol Yarnall - Immediate Past President
Terry Crowe - Secretary
Mike Langner - Treasurer

Members at Large:

Darrell Garcia
Carmen Martin
Peter Pino

Q & A with Adelle Lees (continued)

Q - How do you feel your experiences abroad prepared you for your new role as ACIV's Program Manager?

A - My total immersion in other cultures, some drastically different than my own, has taught me: to be understanding of others' customs and practices, patience while communicating, resourcefulness, and critical thinking skills. Those are all skills that I will use in my role at ACIV. Plus my background in project management, communications, creating databases and analyzing data has equipped me with the skill set needed to effectively grow ACIV.

Q - You are a "Six Sigma Green Belt." Can you explain what that means, and how you are thinking that you might apply this knowledge to the ACIV?

A - Technically speaking, Six Sigma is all about process improvement and lean management through process mapping and data analysis. As a Green Belt, I have been trained to improve the processes of systems already in place within an organization, team, groups, etc. This is done by first defining the goals of our organization or the process output and also mapping our processes. These steps will help us identify areas of improvement, which we do by measuring and analyzing data that is collected. Only then can we implement ways to improve our current processes.

During my first few days in my role, I have discovered that there is a lot of groundwork to be covered that needs to happen for ACIV to become more efficient. We need to identify all of the processes in our organization and create those that are not in place, which there are some missing. The ideas are there, but they haven't been systemized over the years.

Q - Can you give an example of a process that is ripe for improvement?

A - One area where there is much room for improvement in ACIV is in data collection and recording. One of my priorities is to start building databases that will effectively collect data and represent the data clearly. *For example*, a database that collects exit evaluation data on past visitors will help us improve programs for future groups, expand our reach by connecting with past visitors on Facebook and other social media sites, and it will give us an idea of how we can make a greater impact on their visit so that visitors will remember NM for other purposes, rather than just pleasure.

Q - What excites you most about joining the ACIV?

A - Probably the most exciting aspect of being a part of this unique and special organization is creating and seeing change happen. I am so thankful that I will also be able to use and grow my skill set and of course remain connected to a global environment after living all of my adult life in a very international setting.

Q - In what ways do you see the ACIV improving and growing its capacity to host international visitors?

A - I believe once we improve our system and organization, ACIV will be able to add other programs to our program portfolio. We are looking at: long term hosting programs, soliciting hosting services to companies here in NM that may do business internationally, and holding events here in Albuquerque that would be of interest to international academics, leaders, and members of our community that want to be more engaged in international affairs and relations.

Q & A with Adelle Lees (continued)

Q - What message would you like to send to our members and the Albuquerque community to encourage involvement in citizen diplomacy?

A - First of all, I am greatly looking forward to meeting members of ACIV that I haven't met yet and getting to know those who I've met at least briefly. You all have made ACIV what it is today, which I would say is a successful organization. And mostly being a volunteer organization, that makes ACIV very special. I look forward to working with all you fabulous citizen diplomats!

In regards to citizen diplomacy, the sad fact is many people around the world have a negative impression of Americans. I could give my own personal opinions as to why that is but perhaps it would sound unfair to some. So what I will say is that we Americans are very hospitable and we love meeting foreigners, and this is very surprising to our visitors. Our members have positively changed so many of their opinions of us after they have visited that it is truly remarkable what citizen diplomacy can do for international relations. People leave here having a better impression of real Americans, and I think the same can be said for the impression visitors leave on their hosts during the time they are with us.

I also *highly* encourage some cultural immersion while traveling abroad, so that we, as visitors, leave a better impression upon locals when we are visiting their countries.



Bill and Carol Yarnall To Give ACIV Holiday Party December 14th

Please plan to join us for a Holiday Party on December 14th from 2:30-5:30 at the home of Bill and Carol Yarnall. (4311 Pershing Ave SE)

We encourage you to bring a prospective member(s) to enjoy food, raffle prizes, and meeting with our new Program Manager, Adelle and our new Board Members. Please see your invitation, which is enclosed with this letter, for more details. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

ACIV Membership Dues Reminder

Please remember to pay your ACIV membership dues as soon as possible! Send your cash or check to:

The Albuquerque Council for International
Visitors
P.O. Box 30485
Albuquerque, NM 87190-0485

Membership Categories:

- \$ 75.00 - Family Membership (2 or more)
- \$ 50.00 - General Membership (1 person)
- \$ 25.00 - Senior Membership (55 and older) -
Senior couple rate is \$50.00
- \$ 35.00 - Young Professional (19 through 25)
- \$ 10.00 - Student Membership (18 and under)

**THANK YOU TO ALL THAT ARE UP TO DATE. WE
APPRECIATE YOUR CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT!!**