

Global Employment Connections

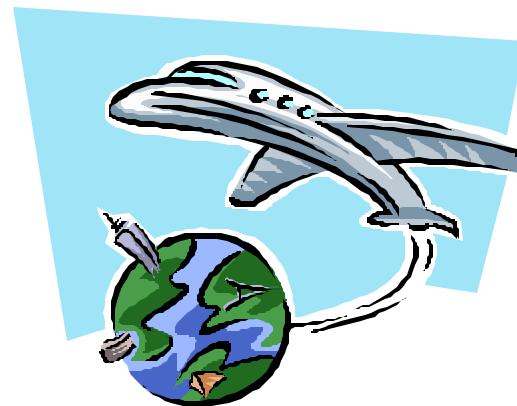


“Your Link to Global Workplace Information”

Diverse Jobs & How Spouses Found Them

Welcome to Global Employment Connections, the newsletter with a practical focus on job-hunting in the global workplace.

If you are interested in finding out about overseas employment opportunities, it may be helpful for you to know about the types of jobs that Foreign Service spouses have already found. In this issue, we asked the SNAP Local Employment Advisors to send us examples. Diverse opportunities are available, including full-time professional level positions, consultant opportunities, free-lance work, and even



entrepreneurial activities. Read on to learn where in the world spouses are working and what kinds of work they are doing.

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...if you are given the opportunity to get your foot in the door, do the best job you can. Regardless if you are an EFM or not, don't just take the job for granted. If you do a good job you will be remembered.

Custom Home Builder Builds Mobile Career

GEC interviewed Tim Pruett, a Foreign Service spouse with a unique background as a custom homebuilder. Tim has held a variety of jobs, using his skills to successfully maintain a career while moving around the world. He is currently the Deputy Executive Officer for USAID Regional Mission for Central Asia in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Q. Can you tell us a little about your background and how you found your job?

A. I started with the U. S. government as a local hire USPSC in 1994 working as a Diplomatic Courier Escort and

APO clerk in El Salvador. I was a dependent of a U.S. direct hire employee. From there, my wife and I were assigned to Almaty, Kazakhstan. The Mission heard I was a custom homebuilder from Texas and asked if I would be interested in a short term contract locating possible sites for a new office building. I completed this short term contract and reported back to the Mission on my findings. The Mission decided to advertise locally for a Special Projects Person. I applied for the position and was selected as a Special Projects Assistant. I was the Project Manager and Construction Su-

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Mobile Career...

(HOME BUILDER, Continued from page 1)

pervisor for the one million dollar new office building renovation and move for one of USAID's largest Missions. The entire project was completed on-time and on-budget.



Our next assignment was in Nicaragua where an announcement was advertised for a local hire USPSC Deputy Executive Officer. Again, I competed for the job, was offered the position, and served for almost two years. During this time in Nicaragua, an announcement was advertised worldwide from Almaty, Kazakhstan for an offshore USPSC Deputy Executive Officer. I applied and competed against 23 possible candidates for an interview. I got an interview, along with six others, and was awarded the position. I elected to take the offshore position over the local position in Nicaragua because of the salary and benefits and it would also give me more opportunity in the future after the end of my contract. I wanted to get my name out there. I am still currently serving as the

Deputy EXO for USAID/CAR.

Q. How long did it take to find the job?

A. Not more than one month at each post and not more than two months after applying for the offshore position.

Q. If other spouses are interested in finding similar types of employment, what is the best advice you can give them?

A. I would say have a good up-to-date resume and if you are given the opportunity to get your foot in the door, do the best job you can. Regardless if you are an EFM or not, don't just take the job for granted. If you do a good job you will be remembered. Mission management moves around in the USG and chances are you will run into them at another post or they have friends/colleagues at other posts. Believe me, they talk to each other!

Suggested Reading List for Job Seekers from the SNAP Local Employment Advisors:

- ◆ *What Color is Your Parachute* 2004 by Richard Bolles
- ◆ *Knock 'em Dead Resumes* by Martin Yate and Peter Sander
- ◆ *Cover Letters that Knock 'em Dead* by Martin Yate
- ◆ *Knock 'em Dead 2004: Great answers to over 200 tough interview questions* by Martin Yate
- ◆ *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: How to do business in 60 countries* by Terri Morrison.
- ◆ *I Don't Know What I Want, but I Know It's Not This: A Step-By-Step Guide to Finding Gratifying Work* by Julie Jansen
- ◆ *Complete Guide to Consulting Contracts, 2nd edition*, by Herman Holtz
- ◆ *Home-Based Business for Dummies* by Paul Edward
- ◆ *Best Home-Based Businesses for Women*, 3rd edition, by Priscilla Huff
- ◆ *101 Internet Businesses You Can Start From Home* by Susan Sweeney

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Do you have questions, comments, ideas?

Share your story and we'll share it with other spouses!

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A Sampling of Jobs in the Global Spouse Community

From the Editor-

Though finding employment in a mobile lifestyle is never easy, many Foreign Service spouses have succeeded in finding interesting work overseas. Here are their stories. From working for a multinational company to starting a small business, spouses are using their diverse backgrounds to build mobile careers. One spouse entrepreneur in Mexico City learned a valuable lesson that can help other job seekers: If no job is out there for you, create one yourself!

Many thanks to all of the spouses and the SNAP Local Employment Advisors (LEAs) who shared their stories. -MH

Sales Director Brussels, Belgium

A spouse moving to Brussels began his job search by contacting the SNAP Local Employment Advisor (LEA) several months ahead of his departure to post. During this initial contact, he was able to quickly clarify his job options and begin to identify and target industry sectors and companies of interest. Immediately after his arrival in August 2003, with the LEA's help, he developed a self-marketing plan that included a strategy for networking. Soon after, a networking contact was made at Honeywell Europe and in January 2004, after three in-depth interviews with Honeywell, he landed "his ideal job" as the Sales Director for Europe, Middle East, and Africa. He believes that by targeting companies' needs with what he could contribute to those companies greatly enhanced his chances for success. His global expertise was a major factor in landing the position with Honeywell. He is pleased that SNAP was able to help him quickly develop a focused and realistic objective, develop a sound job search campaign approach and provide him with the skills and resources necessary to successfully network. He believes uppermost that it takes thoroughness, persistence, and hard work in order to be successful in finding a job on the local economy.

Nurse Consultant and Special Events Consultant Budapest, Hungary

Budapest, Hungary has an active English-speaking expatriate community and there are a number of companies and organizations that serve their needs. A spouse with a varied professional background (in nursing, corporate and personal image consulting, and sales and marketing) targeted this sector to find employment. Through networking and the help of the LEA, she created two exciting professional opportunities:

- ◆ a nurse consultant to American Clinics International, where she works on community liaison, public relations and health promotion issues and serves as a role model/trainer to the nursing staff
- ◆ a special events consultant at the American Club, where she has improved and increased events and membership.

The nursing position was found within one month of starting to look for work and the special events position within two months. Like most successful people, the spouse is continually updating her skills. She is an active member of SNAP and participated in a workshop on networking. Based on the success of these two jobs she has been approached by other companies to organize special events.

Editor, Freelance Journalist Budapest, Hungary

Budapest, Hungary serves as the regional headquarters for many international companies and organizations. The common business language is English. A spouse with an established writing portfolio used her skills to find editing work at a recruiting company. She followed up on a job lead provided by the LEA (who had met with the company to introduce SNAP) and landed a job improving the English materials of a Dutch/Hungarian firm. While it

(JOBS SAMPLING, continued on page 4)

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(JOBS SAMPLING, continued from page 3)

only took two weeks to start the job once she received the job lead, she was hired based on her professional experience and marketing/interview skills, which took time to cultivate. Like most successful people, the spouse is continually updating her skills. She participated in two SNAP workshops on resume writing and interview skills. She also networked to improve her writing portfolio and found work as a freelance journalist and editor for four English language publications: Budapest Business Journal, Budapest Times, IWC Ribbon and "Surviving and Thriving: A Guide to Living in Budapest."

Consultant to Egyptian Craft Center Cairo, Egypt

Macarena Aristequi Piechowski, a spouse in Cairo, explains her reasons for working at the Egyptian Crafts Center (ECC), a local NGO and project of the North South Consultants Exchange: "I feel very valued here. And the people here really care about me and about my husband who's serving in Iraq. It's a very individual choice."

Hired five months after her arrival in Egypt on the basis of a tip by a fellow Spanish national working at ECC, Macarena was originally asked to help polish their website content and write product descriptions for labels. Though the salary is lower than in the U.S., she feels the benefits of the job have been many. Her responsibilities have grown and she is now totally involved in ECC's mission to help Egyptian producers put together a fair trade operation. She visits the producers and is getting to know Egypt and Egyptians. Her job may help create a new career path for her, focusing on working with NGOs and editing. The job has been a great way to break into being a consultant and learning how to present herself. Macarena feels that, in spite of long hours, low pay and limited resources, working in an NGO is the best thing you can do to get to know Egypt and have a spiritually fulfilling time. She finds the mix of different personalities and cul-

tures at work stimulating. And she feels comfortable with the idea that she is doing the job for personal growth and not for financial benefits.

Advertising Executive Durban, South Africa

Mary Beth is a highly successful advertising executive who has come to Durban accompanying her husband on his first tour. Though initially concerned that continuing her career in advertising while overseas was unlikely, she has successfully found a unique opportunity in South Africa to utilize her skills. Through the networking assistance of the SNAP Local Employment Advisor, Mary was able to go on several interviews with advertising companies. She was recently offered a dream job of setting up her own division with a local advertising company, training previously disenfranchised South Africans in her field and developing new advertising concepts. All this and she can work her own hours!

Middle School Learning Support Teacher (Grade 6-8, Special Education) Frankfurt, Germany

Through the networking assistance of the SNAP Local Employment Advisor, a spouse in Frankfurt found a job in Special Education at the Frankfurt International School. The LEA checked the application and resume and made recommendations, and once the application was sent, the spouse heard from the school the next evening. She went in for the interview and was offered the job on the spot! The whole process took about four days. The salary is paid in Euros and pays more than her previous job in Fairfax County, Virginia. If other spouses are interested in finding similar employment, the spouse has this advice: "The thing I learned through this process is that international schools hire early (January, February), and to hand carry copies of my college degrees and teaching certificates when moving overseas, and, of course, a copy of your resume."

(JOBS SAMPLING, Continued on page 5)

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(JOBS SAMPLING, Continued from page 4)

Leisure Writer Geneva, Switzerland

Geneva, Switzerland only has 400,000 citizens. More than 30% of that population is international and the common second language is English. This means that much of the socializing in Geneva happens in English. This also means that there is a fantastic opportunity to participate in the English periodicals that keep the Anglophone world updated with current events and festivities.

One of the spouses took the opportunity of living in Geneva to develop her writing skills. She started by writing for free, in *Geneva Talks*, the Mission's newsletter. When she made her desire to write for other publications known, the SNAP Local Employment Advisor (LEA) mentioned her name to the editor of *The Courier*, a monthly magazine for the American International Women's Club. Though unpaid, this was an opportunity to have her work published. As she became more familiar with writing and put a few published articles under her belt, the Geneva LEA approached the editor of the main English magazine in Geneva. The spouse is now a published writer with a regular column who shares fabulous tidbits of Geneva "best bets"-- from wine bars to stores to where to buy jeans. She reaches the English speaking community, has a ball doing the research, and gets paid!

Dog Trainer London, England

Susan Owen is a dog trainer with a company called Canine Film Academy—a company that offers a variety of training, including training dogs for television and film. Initially, she used SNAP services to find a job as a mammographer (her professional background in the States) but differences in qualifications made it difficult for her to work in the U.K. She decided to pursue other interests—one being training classes for her dog—and was approached

by the owner of the company who asked if she would be interested in a volunteer position as a dog trainer. After going through the class with her own dog, showing great enthusiasm, and asking a lot of questions, she was offered a job!

Although Susan is currently volunteering as a trainer, the experience she has gained will contribute towards receiving a professional qualification as a dog trainer. She is paid for the television work she does, an average commercial paying £250 for the day, and also for home boarding of dogs and parties and entertainment events. Owning a dog training business can encompass training courses for obedience, film/TV work, training dogs to assist disabled people, agility training, grooming, and boarding. Salaries vary depending on services offered.

If other spouses are interested in finding similar employment, Susan recommends taking a class with your dog, talking to professionals in the business, investigating professional qualification courses, and volunteering at dog shows.

Financial Advisor/ Entrepreneur Mexico City, Mexico

A spouse in Mexico City, who had been a financial advisor in the U.S., felt that part-time employment would best meet the needs of her schedule and family responsibilities. Part-time jobs are not available in Mexico, so she decided to create her own. Using her financial background, she started an investment club and met with a small group of people in weekly meetings, where they discussed strategies for healthier finances. She offered additional financial services and, as interest grew, several of the participants in the meetings became her clients. With the support of the SNAP Local Employment Advisor, her business became a reality.

Her pool of customers has now expanded to clients both inside and outside the U.S.



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(JOBS SAMPLING, continued on page 6)



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mission. Her success in building her own business helped her realize she can have a career as an independent financial advisor wherever she goes. Her determination to continue her career, regardless of what the local economy had to offer, not only helped her accomplish her goals but also helped others. She started a trend. Through her example, other embassy spouses became interested in starting their own small businesses. Today, the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City has an entrepreneurs' group with more than 14 people offering their services or products to the embassy community and on the local economy.

Consultant Pretoria, South Africa

With the networking assistance of the SNAP Local Employment Advisor, Gene Cunningham, a spouse with a highly specialized background in security, landed a job as a consultant with the prestigious multinational firm, Clear Channel, based in Johannesburg. This is a unique opportunity. In addition to consulting in South Africa, he will also assist with the company's outreach into Africa.

Translator Rabat, Morocco

A spouse in Rabat found a job translating documents for the embassy from French to English or from English to French. She has a variety of translation tasks, including letters, talking points, diplomatic notes, or newspaper articles, among other assignments.

Her job search began by sending an e-mail to post a few weeks before her departure. From this, she learned there was a job vacancy, so the day after she arrived, she went to the HR office, successfully passed a translation test, and was offered the job! Her advice to spouses who might be interested in finding work as translators:

I guess you need to be fluent in a language other than English, but a lot of spouses are foreign-born. I was lucky that we were assigned to a French-speaking country. I was, however, also asked by UNESCO to

do translation for them, so there are other options available. You could also work from home if you were already a translator in the U.S., which I wasn't. I was also asked by one other spouse for some private French lessons, which is an option I didn't pursue but that I could have developed. The lesson I learned from my job search is to forward your resume to HR as soon as possible! You never know which position might open—even months before you arrive.

Career Services Trainer Seoul, Korea

A spouse in Seoul is employed by a U.S. Government contractor as a trainer providing career services training to soldiers transitioning out of the military. The spouse found the job through SNAP networking connections. The spouse applied with the company and was a finalist for a half-time position but withdrew the application because of the travel requirements. The company contacted her again five months later and offered her a part-time training position on the Youngsan base. The salary for the position is competitive. Training classes are currently offered two to three times per month and the trainer has the option to facilitate one to three classes. This is a great position because the spouse has another part-time position at the embassy.



JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE WEB TOOL

- ◆ Looking for information on companies that are hiring in your country?
- ◆ Want to know about current salary ranges?
- ◆ Maybe you just want to get ideas of occupations that might interest you.

Check out the
SNAP Job Search Assistance Web Tool
You can link to it through
<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/9888.htm>