

MERIDIAN
INTERNATIONAL CENTER

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Building Emerging Global Leaders | Accelerating Cooperation | Sustaining Impact



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CONTENTS

4	A Message from Meridian's President
5	The Year in Review
6	Public & Cultural Diplomacy
22	Global Leadership & Collaboration
30	Public Programs & Events
33	District of Columbia World Connections
36	The Campus
40	Galas & Benefits
42	Supporting Meridian
43	Financials
44	Benefactors
46	Meridian Counselors
47	Management & Contact Information

FRONT COVER

Gateway to America. Above the entrance to Meridian House, the inscription *Quo habitat felicitas nil intret mali* translates "Where happiness dwells, evil will not enter."

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This 2009 Annual Report is optimized for online viewing.

Icons and hyperlinks accompany many sections, and link to photos, videos, news articles and supporting websites that will give the reader a deeper experience of our programs, initiatives and events.

**A MESSAGE FROM
MERIDIAN'S
PRESIDENT**



Ambassador Stuart W. Holliday

The world of the 21st century is highly-networked, presenting us with both the need and the opportunity for cross-border and cross-sector cooperation on key political, economic and cultural issues. Our most critical challenges now demand collaboration among leaders of all sectors – public and private – and the engagement of every day citizens.

Meridian International Center's mission to strengthen international understanding and collaboration has never been more needed in this global reality. Our strategic approach and innovative global engagement programs play an important role in sustaining the long-term competitiveness and security of the United States.

In 2009, Meridian continued to build on its solid foundation and its 50-year partnership with the U.S. State Department, and expanded our programmatic portfolio to include more U.S. government agencies, the private sector, and institutions abroad. Meridian's impact can be seen by the unique and forward-thinking approaches that are generated from our work, and the connections we daily help make between U.S. citizens with the international community.

I wish to thank our outgoing Chair, Ambassador James R. Jones for his strong leadership. He was succeeded in June by Ambassador to Canada and Michigan Governor James Blanchard. Also joining the Board were Burson Marsteller worldwide CEO Mark Penn, Ambassador Tom Korologos, Korn Ferry's Nels Olson, Exxon Mobil's Theresa Fariello, and The Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress's Mary O'Connor. I am grateful for their guidance, support and participation in Meridian.

As we enter our 50th anniversary in 2010, I look forward to Meridian's years ahead, when we will continue to foster the collaboration and effective ideas that will lead to a more secure and prosperous world for all nations.

Stuart W. Holliday
President
Meridian International Center

2009

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Meridian International Center has been advancing work in public and cultural diplomacy and global collaboration since 1960. Tens of thousands of international leaders have participated in our leadership programs designed to increase their understanding of the United States and the American people.

Meridian provides a unique forum for the open exchange of American and international perspectives on current issues and foreign affairs. In this role, the institution serves as a catalyst for positive outcomes to our shared global challenges.

Particular highlights of 2009 include designing and coordinating over 350 international professional exchanges for 1850 leaders from around the world; welcoming Senator John Kerry, Zimbabwean Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangarai, and Tom Friedman of the *New York Times* to Meridian; and creating a major exhibition of contemporary Chinese art marking the 30th anniversary of normalized relations between China and the U.S.

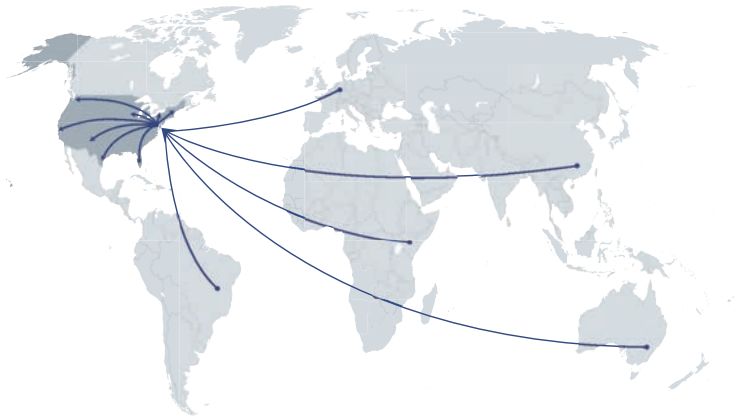
PUBLIC & CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Meridian International Center has been advancing work in public and cultural diplomacy and global collaboration since 1960 and plays an integral role in America's long-term national security and competitiveness.

Tens of thousands of international leaders have participated in our programs designed to increase their understanding of the United States and the American people.

LEADERSHIP EXCHANGES

Meridian is the leading manager of the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange operation – the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)* – and creates custom programs for other U.S. government agencies, as well as public and private sector organizations. Meridian's 2,500 yearly exchanges foster sustainable partnerships by linking Americans and global visitors through communities of interest.



Experience The Democracy Video Challenge, View Videos And Read Stories.

Democracy Video Challenge

Meridian was the lead designer and coordinator of the Democracy Video Challenge (DVC) in September 2009, a public-private partnership promoting a global dialogue on democracy. Through an online contest, the DVC invited citizens from around the world to engage in an online dialogue on the nature of democracy by submitting short videos that completed the phrase “Democracy is...” Over 900 people from 95 countries submitted videos. The winning videos captured distinct visions of democracy in compelling and creative ways. Viewed together, they present a thought provoking global tour of democracy in three-minute “snippets.”

The six winners, one from each region, took part in a prize package which consisted of an all expense paid trip the United States including stops in New York, Washington, DC and Los Angeles where they met with producers, directors, academia and others in the film industry along with democracy advocates. Highlights from their program included an award ceremony with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, appearance with Undersecretary Judith McHale on the Today Show to launch the second cycle of the challenge and a segment on Fox and Friends “After the Show Show”.

DVC partners included the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Directors Guild of America (DGA), New York University Tisch School of the Arts, International Republican Institute (IRI), the International Youth Foundation (IYF), Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), National Democratic Institute (NDI), NBC Universal (NBCU), Taking it Global (TIG) USC's Annenberg School of Communications, USC School of Cinematic Arts, William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), the U.S. Department of State, and YouTube Challenge.

* The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) is the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program. Launched in 1940, the IVLP is a professional exchange program that seeks to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other nations through carefully designed short-term visits to the U.S. for current and emerging foreign leaders.



Pakistani National Assembly Members Study Role of Women in the American Political System

Five female members of the Pakistani National Assembly came to the U.S. in May for a Meridian-designed IVLP to discuss the role of women in the American political system. During their trip the women visited Minnesota's Minneapolis/St Paul metropolitan area, Houston, TX, Raleigh, NC, and Washington D.C. They met with members of Congress, the visitors had opportunities to speak with officials from the CIA, the National Security Council, and the Department of Defense. One of the members, Marvi Memon, was interviewed on CSPAN, where she took phone calls and discussed the relationship between Pakistan and the U.S, and was also featured in an interview in *Newsweek*.



[View Newsweek Article](#)



[View Minneapolis Post Article](#)



The Coral Triangle Project: Protecting Coastal and Marine Environments

The Coral Triangle Initiative project, conducted by Meridian from June 1 – 19, 2009 and sponsored by the U.S. State Department was designed to explore policies and strategies for protecting marine and coastal environments from resource exploitation and climate change effects. The participants from throughout East Asia examined federal, regional, state and local policies and practices to integrate economic and social concerns with ecosystem management techniques. As a result, they hope to preserve fragile marine and coastal resources.

The project began in Washington, DC with an overview of U.S. society, its system of government, and the role of the federal government in protecting or developing marine resources. Meetings at the Department of State and with international NGOs were organized and addressed international programs to aid countries with vulnerable coral reef resources. The delegation then traveled to Florida, Texas, and Hawaii meeting with government officials, resource managers, representatives from local NGOs and university researchers. In several of these stops the need for multi-jurisdictional cooperation was discussed, such as issues that must be negotiated between the U.S. and Canada or Mexico as well as those issues that must be handled through agreements between the states.



[View The Coral Triangle Initiative project webiste](#)



IVLP Participants look on as an employee of Progress Energy points out the mechanics of the company's electric vehicles.

Latin American Leaders: Energy Security for the Future - Clean Energy and Alternative Fuels

Meridian implemented an IVLP entitled "Energy Security for the Future: Clean Energy and Alternative Fuels" from June 6 – 27, 2009. Participants visited Washington, DC; Tulsa, Oklahoma; San Francisco, California; and Orlando, Florida as they worked to fulfill a State Department goal of reviewing U.S. national energy policy and approaches to securing energy resources. These included efforts to expand and diversify energy supply, increase investment in research and technology, and strengthen international cooperation.

One highlight of the trip included a visit to the Orlando facility of Progress Energy, a company with more than 21,000 megawatts of generation capacity. The visitors had an in-depth look at the "smart-grid" technologies that the organization has adopted and drive the electric vehicles they are developing.

The delegation also surveyed the current state of energy supplies, production and demand, as well as the challenges in meeting present and future energy needs in the Western Hemisphere. Additionally, the group explored the U.S. experience in diversifying and expanding energy sources and promoting affordable, clean, and efficient energy from traditional, alternative, and renewable sources.



[View Facility of Progress Energy Article](#)



Delegates at a White House Briefing

Afghan Women Leaders

Five Afghan women business leaders, including a Member of Parliament from Afghanistan came for a Meridian designed IVLP in March to conduct exchanges with women's shelters, NGO leaders, international women's organizations, and law enforcement. The program featured a week of meetings in Washington followed by travel to Seattle, WA, Dallas, TX, Raleigh, NC and New York, NY. While in DC, the women had meetings with Senate Committee members, USAID, non-governmental organizations, and State Department officials. Through the State Department an invitation was extended for the women to attend the White House press conference where President Obama outlined his strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Appointments throughout the U.S. included meetings with former First Lady Laura Bush who maintains her interest and involvement with the women of Afghanistan.



[Read About The Program in the Washington Post](#)



Parks and Ecotourism



From June 8 – 26, Meridian coordinated “Parks, Biodiversity and Ecotourism Management,” an IVLP with visitors from 19 separate countries. The goal of the program was to examine the U.S. world-renowned National Park System, trends in conservation, environmental protection and tourism standards. While in the U.S., the delegation and U.S. field experts discussed the the roles of government and NGOs in biodiversity preservation, parks management and tourism facility development. They also experienced the range of services, infrastructure, and tourist information in U.S. parks and natural attractions.

While in DC, the IVLP participants visited the National Geographic, National Park Service, and a green building in Annapolis, MD. Several collaborations were forged between some visitors and various NGOs.

Much of the group was surprised to learn that Americans care about preserving their history and cultural roots. This revelation came largely due to the meetings with Native American organizations.

Kenya: U.S. Financial Systems

Five key officials from the Kenyan banking system came to the U.S. for a Meridian-coordinated IVLP in March to engage in discussions with high-level officials from the American financial system and the State Department, the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Federal Deposit Insurance Company (FDIC), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. After their visit to Washington, DC, the five officials traveled to San Francisco to meet with VISA International to better understand the credit card industry and the context of the current credit environment.



Dutch Parliamentarians

From April 20th to 24th, Meridian hosted a group of Dutch parliamentarians who came to Washington to examine the first 100 days of the Obama Administration, during which the Netherlands hosted President Obama's first international summit on Afghanistan. After a day of meetings with think tanks, the Federal Reserve and on Capitol Hill, the delegates met with the National Security Council's Director of the for NATO and Western European Affairs and G8 and G20 Affairs in the Old Executive Office Building.

The delegates had worked closely with NSC staff to coordinate all aspects of the conference and were pleased to finally meet in person their American colleagues. The Dutch officials took away a greater understanding of the synergy that exists between U.S. government agencies involved in shaping foreign policy and the tremendous adaptability of the NSC.



Germany: Politics and the New Media: The U.S. Elections as a Case Study

The U.S. Department of State-sponsored "Politics and the New Media: The U.S. Elections as a Case Study" IVLP introduced three Germans - a television reporter and anchor, a former Dusseldorf city council member, and a prominent member of the Turkish community in Germany - to trends in new media development and application in the United States.

During the April 27 – May 8 program, the participants surveyed the political and governmental applications of new media at federal, state, and local levels and developments within traditional media sources towards integrating online videos, blogging, and other interactive applications into their services. They also met with representatives from both the public and private sectors to discuss the use of new media in the recent presidential election, how newspapers and television outlets have transitioned to new media, and the role it can play in reaching out to minority and ethnically diverse populations.

One of the members of the delegation, named Richard Gutjahr, an anchor and reporter for Public German/Baravian Television, blogged, twittered, and posted videos while in the U.S. Gutjahr worked in concert with the consulate in Munich.



[View His Videos](#)

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia & Meridian International Center

Meridian International Center has a long and productive relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The connection goes back to 1985, when His Majesty King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud came to Meridian during his official visit to Washington.

Many other members of the Royal Family have worked with Meridian to promote mutual understanding between the United States and The Kingdom, including: H.R.H. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Governor of Riyadh; HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the first Arab astronaut; HRH Prince Saud bin Faisal bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, Foreign Minister; and Ambassadors to the U.S. HRH Prince Faisal bin Turki Al-Faisal, and HRH Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud.

Saudi Arabia: Religious and Public Education

Eight curriculum specialists from the Saudi Education Ministry were offered their first exposure to the diverse American school system and the responsibilities of federal, state and local K-12 educational institutions during this Meridian-designed IVLP program. In Saudi Arabia, the group's main responsibilities revolve around preparation for mandatory religious instruction.

The visitors met with the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, an organization dedicated to upholding the constitutional separation of church and state. They discussed the implications of this critical divide. The Saudi Arabian guests spoke of how impressed they were that a religiously affiliated organization headed by an ordained minister would favor such separation.

An International Classroom Excursion was arranged by the Educational Outreach office and allowed participants to visit Washington-Latin School. The public charter school welcomed them as Saudi citizens, rather than as educators, which gave the guests an opportunity to engage in an informal discussion with 5th grade students about schools and society in Saudi Arabia.

Tajikistan: Religious Life in America

One of the primary goals of this IVLP was to encourage interfaith dialogue and cooperation. As part of the program, visitors were invited to attend a meeting at the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Held at the Ford House Office Building, participants were given unique insight on the role of Islam and Muslim culture in American society.

In order to foster a cultural exchange, the program also focused on providing Americans with information about the role of Muslim culture in Tajik society. A unique difference observed by the delegation was the absence of U.S. government control over places of religion. Participants were particularly excited to visit schools that highlight when and how religious education is permitted and appreciated the fact that the government did not handle the appointment of Imams. "The levels of religious liberty that we have witnessed in the U.S. are truly admirable," noted one of the visitors.



Kosovo: Breast Cancer Awareness

A year after Meridian helped manage the visit of 16 participants in an IVLP centered on Breast Cancer Awareness – the first ever follow-up teleconference took place between the Moffitt Cancer Center of Tampa, Florida and 19 Kosovan medical specialists at the Telemedicine Center in Prishtina, Kosovo.

The May 2010 teleconference was facilitated by the International Council of Tampa and former IVLP participant, Dr. Elvis Ahmedi, who is the current Head of the Cardiac Surgery Department at the University Hospital in Prishtina. The discussion allowed medical experts from the United States and Kosovo to continue their dialogue on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. This exchange enabled the former visitors to reconnect and gain the most recent insights into public policy, NGO, and grassroots efforts in the fight against breast cancer and to share mutual challenges and strategies used to combat the disease.



Iraq: Human Rights Advocacy and Awareness

Meridian organized and implemented a three-week IVLP in July for six Iraqi human rights and civil-society activists. The participants included a judge, two provincial officials, a legal service provider, and two leaders of human rights organizations. The trip featured visits to Washington, D.C.; New York City, NY; San Diego, CA; Minneapolis, MN and Atlanta, GA.

The project's larger purpose was to examine the nature of human rights and civil rights protection in the U.S., with emphasis on the role of government, the management of non-government organizations, the contribution of professionals in the legal field, and the civil rights history of the U.S.

Ambassador Keith participates the Obama White House's First Exchange in *Second Life*

Following President Obama's speech in Accra, Ghana On the morning of July 11, Meridian Senior Vice President Ambassador Keith participated in a Second Life panel discussion organized by USC's Annenberg School for Communication.

The panel comprised Derrick Ashong, a Ghanaian music superstar, political activist and Harvard graduate who identifies himself as a global citizen, and Professor Timothy Burke of Swarthmore College, an African historian who has also taken an interest in online activities. The panelists reacted to the President's speech from Accra, and then answered questions about how public diplomacy is changing with new technology and the ability to gather in "virtual" public spaces as a new marketplace of ideas.



[View Coverage of The Event](#)



Colombia: Passport Technologies

Funded by US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), Meridian designed and coordinated an exchange program on for a three-person delegation from the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While in Washington, the officials received an overview of U.S. procedures and processes for the procurement, issuance and security of passports. In 2009, Colombia was in the process of developing a machine readable passport in anticipation of the international Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) 2010 deadline, and will then develop an e-passport (passport with embedded chip) program. They learned about the U.S. process and experience developing machine readable and e-passports, particularly best practices and lessons learned. The delegation met with U.S. government officials staff reviewed the steps involved in the process of procuring, securing, printing, adjudicating, personalizing and expediting passports for U.S. citizens. They also had an opportunity to go behind the scenes at Dulles Airport to see how DHS handles immigration and customs screening, and to learn about anti-fraud measures used to secure the passport issuance and utilization processes.

Ocean for Life



[View Program website](#)



In July and August, 30 students from 8 countries in the Greater Middle East along with 9 chaperones and 30 students from the U.S., Canada, France, Australia and Norway took part in Ocean for Life a marine biology field study trip to the Florida Keys and Monterrey, CA. *Ocean for Life* seeks to establish cultural connections that ultimately lead to better understanding and the strengthening of our global relationships. The main themes of *Ocean for Life* are: a sense of place, interconnectedness, and ocean conservation and stewardship. In partnership with the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Geographic, GLOBE, the NESACenter and the AU Center for Environmental Filmmaking, Meridian implemented the Washington, DC cultural portion of this three-week exchange program where all 68 participants were united. The DC component included cultural exchange sessions, youth media project screenings, a guided city-tour, and visits to the U.S. Capitol including meetings with US Senators and Representatives, the White House, the National Aquarium and the recently unveiled Sant Ocean Hall and a VIP reception.



2009 Jazz Envoys – Ecuador

During July 2009, Meridian International Center hosted an eight day program for four visiting jazz students from Ecuador. The 2009 Ecuador - U.S. Jazz Envoy program aims to increase mutual understanding between the people of Ecuador and the United States through a jazz exchange, education and performance program. Prior to arriving in Washington, DC the students participated in a Jamey Aebersold summer jazz workshop to improve their playing and improvisational technique. Their Washington program included a masterful performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Millennium Stage. The ensemble was also able to view a performance by the United States Navy jazz ensemble, the "Commodores," who performed at DC's Bohemian Caverns and participate in a jam session hosted by National Public Radio. Upon their return to Ecuador, the sponsoring U.S. Embassy in Quito enabled the troupe to conduct a series of performances and workshops around Ecuador in order to share their jazz music and their U.S. experience with Ecuadorian audiences and jazz students.

Southern Sudan: Anti-Corruption in the U.S.

Meridian coordinated a twelve day program in August on Anti-Corruption in the U.S. for three Southern Sudanese Anti-Corruption Commission Officials. There is currently no institutional history for anti-corruption or applicable law regarding corruption in Southern Sudan, leading the Sudanese Commission to look for anti-corruption models to emulate. During their time in the United States the visiting officials were take to anti-corruption training areas of investigation, legal services, corruption prevention, and education. Their time in Washington, DC was focused on the federal role in anti-corruption while a closer look at state and local models was the focus of their time in Philadelphia, PA. Meetings where held with the United States Senate Ethics Committee, the American Bar Association, United States Department of Justice, the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center at the School of Public Policy at George Mason University, the Office of Government Ethics, the Pennsylvania Office of the Inspector General, and the Philadelphia District Attorney.

Kyrgyzstan: Privatization and Primary Care

From February 16 to March 6, Meridian coordinated an IVLP for several health professionals from Kyrgyzstan. The program, entitled "Health Care: Privatization and Primary Care" introduced its participants to the U.S. health care system, its structure, delivery systems and efforts toward reform through meetings with doctors, health care administrators, and hospital managers. Major topics included the role of the private sector, financing, personnel training, and prevention of infectious diseases. One participant commented, "We have seen and learnt a lot. I hope it will be helpful for me in my job and in my life... the USA is a great country. It is great not only for its size, but for its people. We should make endeavors to become a country like America."



Ghana Oil and Gas Sector Orientation Visit

Meridian designed and executed a 12-day visit, funded by USTDA, for a delegation of nine government officials and industry representatives from the oil and gas sector in Ghana and one oil and gas sector specialist from the U.S. Commercial Service in Accra. As a result of the 2007 discovery of oil off the coast of Ghana, the government plans to explore, drill and begin export production by 2011. The OV was designed to expose the delegation to U.S. technologies, companies, policies and best practices in oil and gas exploration and port/transportation/infrastructure services, and to introduce these key decision makers to U.S. firms interested in winning future concessions in Ghana. Meridian convened a business briefing in Houston that provided a forum for the Ghanaian delegates to present commercial opportunities for U.S. firms. The visit also included meetings and site visits with key U.S. firms interested in doing business in Ghana at the ports of Galveston, TX and Port Fourchon, LA, the leading oil and gas only service port for drilling activities and services in the Gulf of Mexico.



U.S. Congress-Korean National Assembly Youth Exchange Program

For the twelfth consecutive year, Meridian conducted the U.S. Congress-Korean National Assembly Youth Exchange Program, administered by the U.S. Department of State and sponsored by Congressman Mark Kirk of Illinois. Created in 1981 by Congressman Ben Gilman and Korean National Assemblyman David Pong, this dynamic program brings together young people from the United States and the Republic of Korea for a memorable opportunity to promote cultural awareness and political understanding. Through a program of travel, professional meetings and cultural activities, this program allowed 10 participants from the US to experience Korean culture and participate in cross-cultural exchange. Ten Korean participants also visited the U.S. and learn more about bilateral U.S.-Korean relations.

Middle East: Energy Security for the Future

Coordinated for the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), five visitors from around the world, including Iraq and the West bank, traveled to the United States and met their American counterparts to review bilateral and multilateral energy policies. The discussion pertained to energy security, renewable and alternative energy sources, efficiency, conservation, and the industry's best practices. The program resulted in plans for follow-up discussions, indicated by a statement from an Iraqi visitor who said: "I want to talk with energy people and agriculture people about how we may be able to use new energy forms like wind in our work. I also want to talk about the people of the U.S., and how nice they were to us."

U.S. Political, Social, and Educational Issues for Young European Muslim Leaders

“U.S. Political, Social, and Educational Issues for Young Muslim Leaders,” an IVLP coordinated by from Meridian took these young leaders to Washington, DC, New York City, Columbus, Jacksonville, Sacramento and San Francisco from March 9 – 27, 2009. The program provided broad exposure to the pluralistic nature of the United States and the impact of diversity on political, social and educational policies, issues and institutions. The visitors participated in youth leadership programs and activities that typically help American youth develop the skills necessary to influence public policy in local, national and international arenas.

The Washington program framed the main themes of the project and introduced the group to the decentralized system of government in the United States. Meetings on Capitol Hill included a 30-minute session with Representative Keith Ellison, who had recently given a testimony to the Senate Committee Hearing on “Engaging the Muslim World.” While on The Hill, they met with Congressional Muslim Staffers Association.

In New York, representatives of the Jewish and the Muslim communities at New York University hosted a day of discussion.

In Columbus, the group met with the Somali community to talk about their experiences as a Muslim immigrant group in the US. The group brought in the head of their new Chamber of Commerce to address local business organizational efforts as well as the head of their Somali Women’s Association.

While in Jacksonville, Florida, the group had a service and volunteerism day, preparing and serving lunch at the Sulzbacher Center, which offers food, shelter and healthcare to the homeless, and has job placement programs. The group also visited a Muslim school in Sacramento and met with local police about outreach to ethnic minority groups in the community. The group visited a Muslim school (Al Arquam) where they visited classes and ate with the students, and they spoke with local police about outreach to ethnic minority groups in the community. Both meetings received high marks (the school visit provoked some lively discussion in the evaluation session about the conservative nature of the school).

Closing the program in San Francisco, the delegates visited a Jewish high school where delegates they met with a mix of Rabbis (young, old, male, female), shared lunch with students and staff. While there they experienced the range of viewpoints and experiences in the Jewish community in the United States.



Exchange Programs for Young Iraqi Leaders

Funded by U.S. Embassy, Baghdad, the goal of the *Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Programs* is to empower a group of ~60 Iraqi high school students with the confidence, skills and knowledge to become catalysts for positive change in their communities. The main themes of the program were leadership, conflict resolution, community-building and activism. The first program, held in June, provided many opportunities for practical training, experiential learning, and interaction with Americans in different settings – especially high school students from around the country. Program activities took place in Washington, DC; the Global Youth Village in Bedford, VA; and smaller groups went to one of the following cities for home-stays with American families: Kansas City, Missouri; Raleigh, North Carolina; Little Rock, Arkansas; Seattle, Washington; Burlington, Vermont; Dallas, TX; Charlotte, NC. The programs concluded with an evaluation in New York City.

In July and August, Meridian arranged another program for 19 Iraqi high school students modeled on its original IYELP project, also for the U.S. embassy in Baghdad. Students visited Washington, DC; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and New York, New York; spent a week with other American teens at the Global Youth Village; and stayed in the homes of American families in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Dallas, Texas.

Synopsis of Global Leadership Exchanges

For 50 years, the U.S. Department of State has partnered with Meridian to conduct people-to-people exchanges through the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). This sustained partnership between the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and Meridian has brought thousands of civic, educational, and professional leaders to the United States.

To enhance the success of the IVLP, Meridian also designs, plans and executes specialized and targeted exchange programs, professional study tours, and training programs for delegations from around the world. Our major clients include American embassies abroad, U.S. government agencies, U.S. private industry, as well as foreign public and private sector organizations such as governments, embassies, political parties, media outlets and corporations.

The graph below shows the scale of the IVLP and other exchange programs during 2009.

Program	Individuals	Projects
IVLP	1357	269
Near East/South Asia	341	64
Eastern Europe	138	44
East Asia/Pacific	112	46
Western Europe	93	51
Western Hemisphere	80	21
Africa	35	7
Regional Groups	259	22
Multi Regional Groups	299	14
Voluntary Visitors:	116	27
Individuals	17	12
Groups	99	15
United States Embassy Exchanges¹	161	21
U.S. Trade and Development Agency²	18	2
Foreign Press Center³	94	8
Office of Broadcast Services³	96	32
TOTAL:	1,842	359

1. Exchanges contracted from U.S. embassies abroad include professional study tours for delegates selected by the Embassy. These also include study tours for private overseas organizations nominated by U.S. embassies, such as labor unions, political parties and industry.

2. USTDA: Orientation visits for foreign delegations from developing nations in a number of industry sectors, most recently energy and information technology

3. FPC and OBS: Administrative Support for foreign visiting journalists covering the United States.

CULTURAL EXHIBITIONS

Meridian's vibrant Art for Cultural Diplomacy programs play a vital role in achieving its mission by creating opportunities for Washington, DC and national audiences to learn about other cultures through the eyes of their visual and performing artists. In 2009 Meridian continued to provide unique cultural experiences in the Washington, DC community, as well as throughout the U.S. and around the globe. Meridian's exhibitions, concerts, and other cultural programs presented in Washington, DC attracted over 25,000 visitors, who experienced other cultures through the work of international creative artists. Meridian exhibitions have traveled to 320 cities in 44 U.S. states and 50 countries.



Painting the Heart of Russia: Nikolai Timkov's Sustaining Vision (November 4, 2008 – March 18, 2009)

Opened on November 14, 2008, and on display until March 8, 2009, Meridian International Center presented selections from "The Timkov Collection", provided by Timothy and Lisa Wyman, featuring remarkable landscapes by renowned Russian painter Nikolai Efimovich Timkov (1912-1993).

This exhibition, involving the Embassy of the Russian Federation, provided an opportunity for Meridian to work closely with Russia at a crucial time of leadership change.



[View the Exhibition Online](#)



Metropolis Now! A Selection of Chinese Contemporary Art (March 26 – September 13, 2009)

"METROPOLIS NOW! A Selection of Chinese Contemporary Art" chronicled the significant changes taking place in China as that country experiences the rapid growth of its cities and the impact of globalization.

This exhibition was the fruit of a long-standing relationship involving artistic and cultural exchanges between Meridian International Center and Chinese partners. It was inspired by a desire to provide Americans with a sense of today's China through the medium of art. It also marked the 30th anniversary of China's opening to the world and the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between our two countries. Meridian, together with the National Art Museum of China (NAMOC), identified the artworks included in this exhibition. According to NAMOC Director Fan Di'an, METROPOLIS NOW! "represents a new achievement in cultural exchange between our nations and is the first exhibit of its kind to reach Washington, DC."



[View the Exhibition Online](#)



US-China Relations: A Cultural Window into Economic Growth and Globalization

As a part of the Metropolis Now! cultural exhibition, Meridian presented a symposium featuring prominent members of the art and museum community in China and the United States. Panelists included the Director of the National Art Museum of China, Fan Di'an, several prominent Chinese artists, Ambassador Paula Dobriansky, Former Under Secretary of State of Democracy & Global Affairs, Dr. Bruce Cole, President and CEO of the American Revolution Center at Valley Forge & Former Chairman and National Endowment for the Humanities, John Pomfret, editor of Outlook of The Washington Post and author of Chinese Lessons: Five Classmates and a Story, and James Kitfield, a Senior Correspondent of The National Journal. The panel discussion was in collaboration with the exhibit Metropolis Now! A Selection of Contemporary Chinese Art on display at the Cafritz White-Meyer Galleries through July.

Timed to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of formal U.S.-China diplomatic relations, speakers addressed the ways in which urbanization and globalization have influenced the direction of contemporary Chinese art. Also addressed were the ways in which the development of contemporary Chinese culture has played a role in the US-China relationship.



[Watch the Video](#)



Rufino Tamayo and the Mixografía® Years (1974-1990): A Cross Border Journey (October 2, 2009 – February 14, 2010)

Meridian, in collaboration with the Mixografía® Workshop and Landau Traveling Exhibitions in Los Angeles, organized an important exhibition of nearly 40 signed prints by renowned Mexican artist Rufino Tamayo (1899-1991).

This exhibit was enhanced by a February 3rd event developed in partnership with the Mexican Cultural Institute and the Embassy of Mexico in Washington, DC. This program includes a “conversation” with Dana Gioia, of the Aspen Institute and former Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts; H.E. Arturo Sarukhan, Ambassador of Mexico to the United States; and Jesús Silva-Herzog Márquez, an essayist, professor, and well known Mexican intellectual. The talk focused on cultural exchanges between the U.S. and Mexico. This was followed by a reception featuring original Tamayo prints, Mexican video installations, “topical” refreshments and a DJ. The reception also included input from the Pink Line Project and was a continuation of the relationship established with our successful China reception this past September.



[View the Exhibition Online](#)



Jam Session: America's Jazz Ambassadors Embrace the World

To honor the remarkable achievements of the renowned American jazz legends who traveled to 35 countries and 4 continents on behalf of the U.S. State Department from the mid-1950s through the 1970s, Meridian inaugurated a photographic exhibition, *Jam Session: America's Jazz Ambassadors Embrace the World* on April 4, 2008. Developed in collaboration with University of Michigan professor Penny M. Von Eschen and drawn from collections around the United States, the presentation contains more than 100 images capturing memorable moments from these cultural diplomacy tours. Photos capture scenes such as Dizzy Gillespie straddling a motorcycle with a famous Yugoslav musician; Louis Armstrong meeting a revered national leader in Nigeria; Benny Goodman entertaining kids in Moscow's Red Square and much more. It is the first time that photographs representing this positive experience in American cultural diplomacy have been collected for a single exhibit.

Domestic Tour

In 2009, *Jam Session* began travelling the United States after its opening at Meridian's Cafritz Galleries in the fall of 2008 with an installation in the Rotunda of the Russell Senate Office Building during the inauguration of President Obama. It then travelled to New York City's *Jazz at Lincoln Center*, where it was seen by over 50,000 people over 7 weeks. It then went to the Jazz Heritage Center in the Fillmore District of San Francisco, opening with a concert by the Brubeck Institute Jazz Quintet and a reception honoring jazz ambassador Randy Weston and Benjie Goodman, daughter of musical diplomat Benny Goodman.

After its display in California, *Jam Session* was exhibited the Louisiana State Museum in the French Quarter of New Orleans as part of the annual city-wide Satchmo Festival and at the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City. The exhibition will continue to travel the country at least until 2012.

World Tour

As part of Meridian's \$500,000 contract with the U.S. State Department, six facsimile exhibitions of *Jam Session* were printed, framed, crated, and consigned in 2009. They are travelling simultaneously to all six of the State Department's global regions. Venues included Poland, Bahrain, Sri Lanka, Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Mozambique. Future venues will be linked to jazz festivals around the world and it is expected that these shows will reach 100-120 host cities, primarily at museums and cultural organizations, over the course of the next three years. Beyond its role in creating the exhibition for the Department of State, Meridian's Arts Division also is working actively to promote venues worldwide in places such as Seoul, Shanghai, and Tokyo.



[View the Exhibition Online](#)



[Listen to BBC Coverage of Jam Session](#)



[Listen to NPR Coverage of Jam Session](#)



GLOBAL LEADERSHIP & COLLABORATION

Meridian provides leaders from around the world with tools and a methodology to leverage global peer networks, cross-sector exchanges, and knowledge sharing. Our neutral convening platform and outcome-focused exchanges and seminars accelerate dialogue and help established and emerging leaders hone their talents, share their experience and realize sustained positive impact.



Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan: *Bilateral Relations Between the United States and Mexico*

On April 30, Meridian International Center and the U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Commerce partnered to host a briefing by Mexican Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan as a dialogue on both the historic meetings between President Obama and President Calderon and the new initiatives of the upcoming Summit of the Americas

The briefing, hosted at Meridian's campus in Washington, DC, ensured the sharing of views and concerns between Ambassador Sarukhan and leaders from the public and private organizations actively involved in supporting Mexico's continued economic development. Participating in the event were key officials from U.S. government agencies including the Department of State, Department of Agriculture and the Department of Energy, representatives from private equity firms invested in Mexico, and leaders from key multilateral financial institutions, such as the IFC, World Bank, and the Inter American Development Bank, and members of the press.



[View Event Photos](#)

Global Insight and China: The Financial Crisis: Institutions and Reform

Sponsored by Visa Inc., thirteen executives from China's Ministry of Finance and the Bank of China travelled to the United States for a week of meetings and professional training to learn about the United States' financial institutions and how they interact with one another. Visiting New York City, Charlottesville, VA, and Washington, DC the delegation participated in a two-day leadership training at the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia and had meetings with their US counterparts in both the public and private sectors. Key meetings included those with representatives from the US Treasury, the US Congress, the FDIC, the Federal Reserve Bank, and the National Economic Council.



Senator John Kerry at Meridian: *The Road Ahead: American Foreign Policy*

On Thursday, April 30th, Senator John Kerry spoke at a salon dinner at Meridian International Center on *The Road Ahead: American Foreign Policy*. Hosted by DLA Piper and Meridian International Center, in cooperation with the American Security Project, the dinner brought together over 70 individuals committed to supporting renewed US global engagement. Several Ambassadors were in attendance, including H.E. Pekka Lintu, Ambassador of Finland, H.E. Luis Valdivieso, Ambassador of Peru, H.E. Erlan Idrissov, Ambassador of Kazakhstan, H.E. Salem Al-Sabah, Ambassador of Kuwait, and H.E. Urs Ziswiler, Ambassador of Switzerland, H.E. Aziz Mekouar, Ambassador of Morocco, and other distinguished Diplomatic officials.



[View Event Photos](#)



Middle Eastern and North African NGOs: Best Practices Using Technology

Meridian hosted a roundtable discussion for an IVLP delegation of NGO leaders from the Middle East and North Africa on Friday, May 1st.

Moderated by Ambassador Stuart Holliday, President of Meridian International Center, the roundtable discussed “Best Practices: Using Technology to Maximize your NGO,” and brought together American NGO leaders with their international counterparts to exchange best practices and shared thoughts on how to incorporate technology & new media in to their day-to-day practices. American participants in the roundtable included Dr. Susan Blumenthal, former Assistant Surgeon General, Dennis Whittle, CEO, Global Giving, André Mendes, COO, Special Olympics, and Brendan Tuohey, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Peace Players International.

Topics for discussion included: utilizing social networks & other new media to spread awareness and increase NGO outreach in the community; managing online donations & increasing philanthropic contributions; and, employing new media to connect with NGO leaders globally to knowledge-share and exchange best practice. The NGO leaders from the Middle East & North Africa represented a wide-range of organizations, including organizations focused on healthcare, women’s rights, microfinance, and youth empowerment.



[View Photos of the Conference](#)



Prime Minister of Zimbabwe Visits Meridian

On 9 June 2009, H.E. Morgan Tsvangirai, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe returned to Meridian. The salon dinner held in his honor celebrated his leadership over the 20 years since his last visit here.

Meridian President Stuart Holliday officially welcomed the Prime Minister and his Minister of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion Elton Mangoma, Minister of Regional Integration and International Cooperation Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga, and Minister of Tourism Walter Mzembi.

During the dinner, the Prime Minister discussed his 10-year history with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), an organization he founded to return democracy back to Zimbabwe, the current situation in Zimbabwe, and his personal journey to Prime Minister.

Guests included American lawyer and television personality Star Jones; the Head of Andean Parliament Ambassador Yvonne Baki, former U.S. Ambassador to Qatar and Meridian Senior Vice President Kenton Keith, former Congressman Toby Moffett, and Ms. Josephine Cooper of Toyota.

Twenty years ago Tsvangirai journeyed to the U.S. with a State Department-sponsored International Visitor Leadership Program. This delegation included 17 leaders who started their visit at Meridian and travelled to New York, Wyoming and California to study labor issues and best practices in the United States.

Prime Minister Tsvangirai was sworn in on February 11, 2009 and is the leader of the Zimbabwean political party the Movement for Democratic Change. In his remarks at Meridian, and his speech at the Council on Foreign Relations the next day, Tsvangirai highlighted the importance of his visit to the United States in the formative stages of his career, and expressed that he “was struck by how much the people of America reminded him of the people of Zimbabwe.”



[View Event Photos](#)



(L-R) Chevron's Jay Pryor, Dr. Sami Al Araj, Chairman of the Iraqi National Investment Commission, Hon. Stuart Holliday, President of Meridian



USIBIC delegates at Meridian

US-Iraq Business and Investment Leaders Conference

On October 20, Meridian International Center hosted a delegation of US and Iraqi business and government leaders at the close of the opening day of the US-Iraq Business and Investment Conference (USIBIC). The USIBIC was organized by the U.S. Department of State, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Iraqi Embassy to focus on twelve sectors: agriculture, banking/finance, defense, electricity, health, education, housing/construction, oil/gas, telecommunications, tourism, industry, and transportation.

Opened by Meridian's president Ambassador Stuart W. Holliday, the Meridian reception featured remarks by Jay Pryor, Vice President of Business Development for Chevron, Ambassador Patricia Haslach, Coordinator for Assistance Transition, U.S. Embassy Baghdad, and closed with a statement by Dr. Sami Al Araj, Chairman of the Iraqi National Investment Commission.

At the reception, Jay Pryor of Chevron highlighted the important new chapter in relations between Iraq and the US, as well as Chevron's ongoing commitment to support the economic development of Iraq and the continued work of Meridian to support leadership development and exchange. Dr. Sami Al Araj stated that the USIBIC surpassed all expectations.

The conference and reception marked a positive shift in relations between the US and Iraq as articulated in the new *Strategic Framework Agreement* between the two nations. The conference and reception were successful in promoting current investment and business opportunities in Iraq, providing matchmaking opportunities for U.S. and Iraqi firms, and providing opportunities for U.S. firms to meet with Iraqi Ministers and other senior Government of Iraq officials.



[View Photos](#)



[US-Iraq Business and Investment Conference \(USIBIC\), view video](#)



[Read Ambassador Patricia Haslach's remarks](#)



Energy & Environment: International Cooperation on COP-15 Implementation

As part of its ongoing work to support the COP15 process Meridian International Center and partnered with Deutsche Bank and the UN Foundation's Global Leadership for Climate Action Initiative to convene an October 15 roundtable meeting "*Energy & Environment: International Cooperation on COP-15 Implementation.*"

Participants were assembled to focus on successful strategies that will emerge from the COP15 meetings, looking specifically at insights on policy and investment models for public/private financing. While there were a number of pre-COP15 meetings, this roundtable was designed to build on current finance discussions and include a unique cross-section of finance and policy leaders from: US government agencies, the US Congress; the World Bank Group; the United Nations; the global banking industry; international cleantech funds; leading infrastructure companies; and alternative energy companies who are shaping the policy and investment decisions that will impact how global leaders will finance COP15 commitments.

Moderated by Meridian's president Ambassador Stuart Holliday, various participants from the public and private sectors included keynote speakers Congressman Bart Gordon (D-TN), Chairman of the House Committee on Science and Technology; Ambassador Friis Peterson of Denmark; Senior Fellow Mohamed El-Ashry, Director of the UN Foundation's Global Leadership Climate Initiative and former CEO & Chairman of the World Bank Group's Global Environment Facility (GEF); and Kevin Parker, Global Head of Deutsche Bank's \$US600bn Asset Management portfolio and the Deutsche Bank Executive

Committee member leading the company's global climate efforts. The 40 participants agreed on the necessity of both private and government funding for clean energy projects, the importance of accountability and transparency, and the need to make investments as low-risk as possible to receive as much capital as possible.



[Watch the Meeting](#)



H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness: Strengthening International Collaboration

On Monday November 9, 2009, Meridian International Center brought together government leaders, diplomats, policymakers, scientists, and public health officials in two roundtable discussions on international collaborative efforts and the public health, economic, and national security issues surrounding H1N1.

This two-part Meridian Roundtable discussion was moderated by distinguished global health expert and the Director of Meridian's Global Health Program Rear Admiral Susan Blumenthal, M.D.

The first session, *Global H1N1 Pandemic Update* focused on the immediate state of the H1N1 global pandemic, how the disease might continue to spread this fall and winter, and possible obstacles to an effective international response. Participating international health leaders included:

- Mr. Bernard Merkel, *Minister Counselor and Head of Food Safety, Health and Consumer Affairs – European Commission Delegation*;
- Dr. Carole Heilman, *Director of the Division of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)*; and
- Dr. Michael Osterholm, *Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP), University of Minnesota*.

In the second session, *Accelerating Solutions: The Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Responding to Pandemics*, the panel addressed the international response to the pandemic, examined the development and distribution of medicines and vaccines, and explored innovative public-private partnerships that are developing collaborative, global solutions to respond to H1N1 and other diseases. Participating experts included:

- Ambassador John Lange, *Senior Program Officer for Developing-Country Policy & Advocacy, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and former Special Representative on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, U.S. Department of State*;
- Michael McGuire, *Vice President for Anti-Infectives, Roche*;
- Dr. Octavio F. Pinheiro de Oliveira, *Advisor on Viral Diseases, Department of Health Surveillance, Disease Prevention & Control – PAHO*; and
- Mr. Greg Rotz, *Partner, Global Health Practice – Booz and Company*



Watch The Panel Discussions



Next Generation Project: “Obama – One Year Later.”

On December 16, 2009, forty Next Generation Fellows from across the nation including government officials, representatives from business, hi-tech industry, international institutions, the military, nonprofit organizations, the media, and academia gathered at the Meridian International Center in Washington, D.C. to address the topic, “Obama – One Year Later.” The Assembly was co-sponsored by The American Assembly, The Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law at the University of Texas, the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), and the Meridian International Center (MIC), and it was the first meeting in the second phase of The Next Generation Project. The Next Generation Project is directed by Francis J. Gavin, Director of the Strauss Center for International Security and Law at The University of Texas at Austin. Admiral B. R. Inman, Lyndon B. Johnson Centennial Chair in National Policy, The University of Texas at Austin and Trustee of The American Assembly chaired the senior advisory council of The Next Generation Project and observed the meeting. After introductory remarks, the Assembly opened with a panel, moderated by John Nagl, president of CNAS. Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins, Coordinator for Threat Reduction Programs, Department of State; Janine Davidson, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Plans; and Erik Leklem, Senior Strategy Advisor, Department of State served as panelists. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Forces, addressed the fellows at a luncheon plenary session.



[View Reports, Papers And Photos Of The Conference](#)



Third Annual Bridges of Understanding Conference

In light of both political and economic changes in the Middle East over the past year, the third annual Bridges of Understanding conference, held on December 4, 2009 in Washington, DC, brought together political, economic, financial, and energy experts to discuss “**The State of Affairs in the Middle East.**” Attended by over 100 guests, including representatives from Arab Embassies in the United States, the conference attracted a diverse group of individuals interested in learning more about the current state of the Middle East, and in finding ways to improve relations between the United States and the Arab world.

The day opened with a welcome from Meridian’s President, **Ambassador Stuart Holliday**, and from the Bridges of Understanding President, former Jordanian **Ambassador Karim Kawar**. Bridges’s co-founder, Kathryn Hubbard profiled the “Youth Talk” program, organized through Bridges’s partnership with Global Nomads Group, which partners Arab and American high schools for videoconferences, discussions, and mutual appreciation.

The conference also hosted *New York Times* columnist **Thomas L. Friedman** as the principal speaker on political developments, sharing his insight and experience in the region. Interviewed by a Bridges Board Member, **David Bradley** of *The Atlantic*, Friedman spoke for an

hour on topics including the current situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, his outlook regarding the region, and the role of Pakistan. He also fielded questions from the audience. Friedman emphasized the need for governmental reform in Afghanistan - as Afghans already know how to fight, he argued that international aid should instead focus on creating a representative government that will stand up against corruption. He further stressed the necessity of establishing a government to which Afghans feel accountable, and for whose survival they are willing to fight.

Friedman and Bradley's discussion was followed by a panel of four experts in economics and energy for the "Energy and Financial Developments in the Middle East" panel. These included **Justin Dargin** of Harvard's Dubai Initiative; **John Delaney** of CapitalSource, Inc.; **Michael Farr** of CNBC; and **Reuben Jeffery**, former Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs. The discussion was moderated by **Ambassador Stuart Holliday**. This panel touched on such timely issues as the recent developments in Dubai and their impact on the world as a whole; the precedent of trust as it relates to the financial crisis; the need to create more jobs throughout the Middle East, and in the UAE in particular; and the role of Shari'a law in banking, also with a focus on the UAE.

Her Excellency Houda Ezra Ebrahim Nonoo, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States also delivered remarks. The first Jewish woman to serve in this post, Ambassador Nonoo is a reminder of the diversity of the Arab world, and of the potential for women's success. She discussed Bahrain's position in relation to other Gulf States and the broader Middle East, her role as a Jewish woman representing her country abroad, and the need for increased personal communication between Arabs and Americans in order to break down stereotypes. The idea she touched on, the need to build bridges of understanding between the two sides of the world, was truly the theme of the day.



To View Videos of the Conference, Click Here.



To View Photos Click Here

PUBLIC PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Meridian stands at a neutral intersection of the public, private and diplomatic sectors, giving our public programs and events a depth and scope that is unique. From keynote speeches by some of the world's top leaders, to roundtable discussions on global challenges, we provide opportunities throughout the year for innovative exchanges of ideas on international issues with our leadership network.



Left to right: Sherry Mueller, president, NCIV; Nancy Gilboy, president, International Visitors Council of Philadelphia; Quincy Carter, former member, NCIV Board; Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg; and Ambassador Stuart Holliday

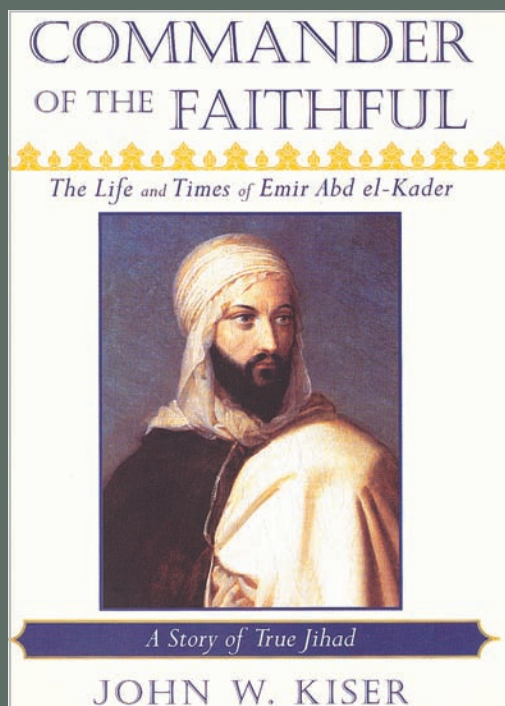
Stuart Holliday introduces James Steinberg in his first speech in his new role as Deputy Secretary of State

On February 11, Meridian International Center hosted the "Luncheon with the Ambassadors" for the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV), during which Ambassador Stuart Holliday, President of Meridian, introduced the luncheon's keynote speaker, James B. Steinberg. Mr. Steinberg then gave his first official speech as Deputy Secretary of State, focusing on the need for global partnership in engaging citizens in international dialogue in order to create a more peaceful world.

This year's luncheon, an important component of NCIV's National Meeting, featured a diverse group of 55 diplomats and a record-breaking number of foreign ambassadors, attracting international media attention, including coverage in The Taipei Times.



[View The Video](#)



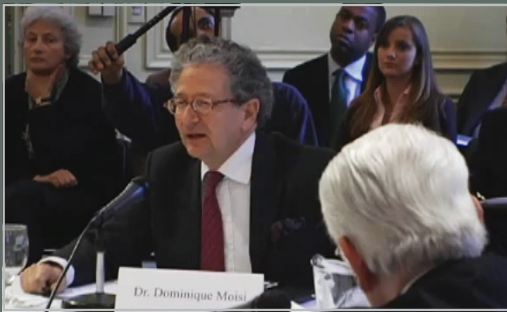
John Kiser: *Commander of the Faithful: The Life & Times of Emir Abd el-Kader*

On March 18th, Meridian International Center welcomed author John Kiser to speak about his latest book, *Commander of the Faithful: The Life & Times of Emir Abd el-Kader*. After a brief introduction by Ambassador Kenton Keith, Mr. Kiser discussed the compelling story of Emir Abd el-Kader, generally regarded as an obscure Arab jihadist, and highlighted his relevance towards creating religious understanding in today's world.

Mr. Kiser believes Abd el-Kader's life remains especially relevant to our times due to el-Kader's demonstration of a universal spirituality that transcends the boundaries of religion. El-Kader provided a profound model, combining the virtues of courage, wisdom, and generosity with an overwhelming obligation towards faith and divine law. The author of three books, Mr. Kiser spent many years researching his subject, including a year in France to prepare this book.



[View The Video](#)



The French and American Presidential Connection: Coordination and Cooperation During Crisis

On April 20, Meridian in cooperation with the Embassy of France with the support of the Lounsbery Foundation, presented a symposium on the relationship between the French and American presidencies, which examined how past US-French cooperation on a variety of issues – such as the Middle East, NATO, and global financial affairs – have played out at important points in time and the potential for greater cooperation in future. *Washington Post* Foreign Affairs columnist Jim Hoagland moderated the event which included panelists Ambassador David L. Aaron, Ambassador Jacques Andréani, Dr. Charles G. Cogan, Dr. Dominique Moïse, Admiral Édouard Guillaud, Ambassador Karl Hofmann, and Ambassador Robert Hunter.

In the first session, panelists and participants used the French-American Cultural Foundation's research study, written by former *International Herald Tribune* correspondent Joseph Fitchett, "The Presidencies: A Unique Dynamic between the U.S. and France" to frame a discussion of two comparative case studies in which the style and substance of communications between the two presidencies led to different outcomes at critical junctures (1991 Desert Storm/The 2003 Invasion of Iraq; France's NATO accession effort in 1996/contemporary re-accession aspirations). In the second panel, panelists looked ahead to examine the prospects for cooperation in the major global issues we face and established how the need for a strong US-French relationship is more important now than ever before. U.S.-French cooperation will be instrumental in combating the many global issues at hand. With a precarious global financial situation, an ongoing crisis in Gaza, and France's hopes of rejoining NATO at the end of 2009, a need for a strong US-French relationship is more important now than ever before.

Over 70 guests attended the program as members of the audience including Ambassador Arthur Hartman, former Ambassador from the US to France, David Ignatius, *The Washington Post*, Esther Coopersmith, Leo Michel, National Defense University, David Calleo, Director of European Studies, SAIS, Ambassador Pierre Vimont, Ambassador of France to the USA, several representatives from the Embassy of France, among other distinguished guests.



[View Video](#)



Meridian Welcomes New Peace Corps Director Aaron Williams

On Tuesday, December 8, 2009, Meridian International Center held a special reception in honor of The Peace Corps, with welcoming remarks by its new Director Aaron S. Williams. Williams is the organization's 18th Director, and was sworn in on August 7, 2009.



[View Photos](#)

Brazilian artist and social activist Alexandre Barreto on Service and Civic Engagement

On June 4th 2009, Brazilian rapper and social activist Alexandre Barreto, who goes by his rap name 'MV Bill' spoke to an audience at Meridian International Center about his work to improve the condition of *favelas*, urban shantytowns, in Brazil. Traveling to the United States under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program, MV Bill was provided with opportunities for professional interchange with NGO and artistic and cultural counterparts, and hoped to expose the diversity of the United States.

MV Bill began his work as an artist roughly two decade ago when he was first exposed to American hip hop. Recognizing the music's power as a medium for political expression, MV Bill now uses his work to raise awareness about the poverty, drug trafficking, and police brutality in his home country.

During his presentation he argued that the best way of confronting the problems facing Brazil's *favelas* was through education but that cooperation with police and political authorities would also be necessary. He noted, "The government has to understand that police can't be the only branch of government in these cities" and described several programs that he helped start that bring teachers and social agents to impoverished communities. Already, improvements have been made to reduce police corruption and brutality through new strategies that encourage police forces to collaborate with residents.

Ecuadorean Indigenous Leaders

On June 10, Meridian facilitated the visit of two representatives of indigenous tribes in Ecuador who are traveling to Washington, D.C., under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). During a lunchtime presentation in the White-Meyer House, the representatives, Nivaldo Yiyoaje Quenama of the 1,200-member Cofan tribe and Olindo Nastacuaz Pascal of the 3,445-member Awa tribe, described the political and environmental problems facing their communities.

The two speakers focused on the work that their tribes are doing to protect the environment, which is a fundamental component of their cultures, through patrols and scientific research. Both tribes' reservations are heavily threatened by logging, hunting, oil extraction, and mining, and neither receives adequate funding from the central government to fully protect their territories, which constitute over two million square miles combined. Furthermore, they also have limited access to education and infrastructure and face problems related to drug-trafficking in their territories, which border Colombia. In the U.S., both visitors would like to learn about the issues facing Native American tribes and national parks.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WORLD CONNECTIONS

Meridian works with the liaison of the Executive Office of the Mayor to connect the District with the diplomatic corps through cultural and educational programs; empower educators to bring the world into DC schools; inspire Washingtonians to engage with the wider world; and enhance the reputation of the District abroad.



A Wired World

With a generous grant from the Heisley Family Foundation, A Wired World is a web and video conference enabled exchange between pairs of classrooms in the U.S. and abroad. Students interface in real time with their counterparts, asking questions about the issues they have studied over the course of a shared curriculum.

Three District of Columbia, ranging from sixth grade to high school, were matched with three classrooms in Ecuador, South Africa, and the United Kingdom with similarly-aged students. From February to May 2009, each classroom pair developed a better understanding of a specific social, political or environmental topic within their curriculum (i.e global warming, race relations, etc). Meridian set up a web-based, communication platform through the Meridian website for students and teachers to communicate as they learn about their counterparts' culture and share responses to the given topic-area.

On June 3rd, 8th, and 10th D.C. students visited Meridian and participated in a digital videoconference where they interfaced in 'real time' with their counterparts, asking questions about the issue they have studied over the course of the program.

View the participating student's Wired World interaction through their blogs at



Wired World: Sunderland, UK – Washington, DC, USA
<http://wiredworld.edublogs.org/>



Wired World: Ambato, Ecuador – Washington, DC, USA
<http://meridian123.edublogs.org/>



Wired World: Tshwane, RSA – Washington, DC, USA
<http://wiredworld2.edublogs.org/>



Her Excellency Ambassador Houda Ezra Ebrahim Nonoo of Bahrain (in red) with Mrs. Michelle Fenty, wife of Washington, DC's mayor

2009 International Children's Festival

With generous support from Cultural Tourism DC, the Heisley Family Foundation, the Humanities Council of Washington DC, and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Meridian International Center hosted the 3rd Annual International Children's Festival on May 9th. Every year, the Festival brings together the DC community and the diplomatic corps of Washington, D.C., as embassies host booths representing their country and culture.

This year, in addition to representation from the United Nations, participating embassies included Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, South Africa, Switzerland, Syria and Turkey. Each embassy created exciting, interactive displays, crafts and other interactive activities highlighting their countries' rich cultural heritage, as their representatives answered questions and explained the wonders of their cultures to Festival participants. These booths introduced local and international children and their families to world geography – engaging children of all ages to learn about the world and the importance of global citizenship.

In addition to embassy-sponsored booths, the Festival offered a variety of global dance and music performances from local and international artists. These performers captivated the audience with examples of Capoeira from Brazil, step dancing from Ireland, and salsa and tango dancing from Latin America.

THE CAMPUS

Meridian is a unique convening center and platform for international dialogue located in the center of Washington, D.C.

The Cafritz Galleries, located in Meridian's historic White-Meyer House, feature many of its Art for Cultural Diplomacy exhibitions and events before travelling the United States and the world.



Gateway To America

Meridian is a gateway to America and a distinguished convening platform for thousands of international leaders each year. The campus provides international leaders with a beautiful and hospitable first impression of the United States.

An International Portal For Washington

Meridian also serves as a “embassy of the world” for Washington, DC. Cultural exhibitions, public programs and networking events allow visitors to engage on a truly global scale. The Meridian Ball, Washington’s premier diplomatic gala since 1968, welcomes the diplomatic corps, government officials, leaders in industry and private citizens to support our mission and work.



History & Architectural Heritage

Meridian House and White-Meyer House, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places, are surrounded by gardens and form a city block of extraordinary historic and architectural interest. Both properties were designed as residences for the families of two distinguished diplomats in the early 20th century by the renowned American architect John Russell Pope, who also designed the National Gallery of Art, the Jefferson Memorial and the National Archives.

Meridian House, considered by many experts to be the finest example of 18th Century French urban architecture in the United States, was built by Irwin Boyle Laughlin, a distinguished American ambassador and member of a Pittsburgh steel family. It became the home of Meridian International Center in 1960, thanks to major support from the Ford Foundation and many Meridian supporters.

White-Meyer House was the home of several distinguished families including American diplomat Henry White. Eugene Meyer, owner of The Washington Post, purchased the house in 1934. It was acquired by Meridian in 1987 through a capital campaign under the leadership of Roberto Goizueta, Chairman and CEO of Coca-Cola. The first floor serves as Meridian's premier art exhibition space, having been refurbished by the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.







Stewardship in Preservation and Restoration

Meridian House, White-Meyer House and their surrounding gardens began vital and extensive restorations in 2008 and continued throughout 2009.

Of critical importance was the replacement of the roofs of both houses — both of which were many decades old — to secure the integrity of the buildings' interior.

Both Meridian House and the White Meyer House received exterior painting, stone, masonry and wood restoration. Preservation work also included ironwork and hardware, structural repair and refinishing of Meridian House's fire escape and shutters. Restoration of weatherstripping of windows of both houses has resulted in more energy efficiency.

Under the careful stewardship of the Board of Trustees and the President of Meridian, the work is of the highest quality of workmanship and materials befitting these national treasures.



GALAS AND BENEFITS

41st Annual Meridian Ball

Friday October 2, 2009 marked the 41st anniversary of the Meridian Ball. One of the most celebrated social events in Washington, the 2009 ball was Chaired by Mrs. Beth Dozoretz.

Over 750 Washington officials, diplomats, media elite and private citizens gathered at Meridian House following dinners at 30 participating embassies as well as our own White-Meyer House.



For a complete look at the 2009 Ball, go to www.meridian.org/ball2009/



POLITICO

VOL. 9 NO. 131

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2009

WWW.POLITICO.COM



The Meridian International Center held a dinner at the White-Meyer House, which greeted guests with a whimsical black-and-white theme.

Meridian's Ball Bar None

Twenty-nine countries hosted pre-ball dinners for this years' festivities.

The 41st annual Meridian Ball on Friday night gave the spotlight and sparkle to Washington's diplomatic corps. Ambassadors from 29 countries hosted cocktails and dinners for congressmen, journalists and business leaders before the ball. Guests then traveled to Meridian House, where designer David Stark transformed the classical home into a magical fantasyland.

Under a canopy of trees with sparkling mobiles, guests enjoyed outdoor cocktails before rain sent everyone inside. The dessert table looked like the Mad Hatter's dining room — with cakes made of flowers, teapots askew and, of course, desert: pies, brownies, minitarts and more. The Eric Felten Orchestra played inside Meridian House while a DJ kept the dancing going in an outdoor tent.

And though the black-tie evening was pure fun — "There are no speeches, no program," said the ball's chairwoman, Beth Dozoretz — the event raises awareness and funds for the Meridian International Center, a nonprofit, nonpartisan public diplomacy institution. POLITICO provides a peek at some of the pre-ball dinners.

See MERIDIAN BALL on Page 20



Rep. Bart Gordon (left) and wife Leslie with Rep. Ed Royce and wife Marie



Ambassador Samir Sumalkale, Henry Harrison and Mayor Adrian Fenty





2009 Spring Garden Benefit: An Evening in Yucatán

On May 7, 2009, Meridian International Center was pleased to present the third annual Spring Garden Benefit, "Evening in Yucatán", under the Honorary Patronage of His Excellency the Ambassador of Mexico Arturo Sarukhan and Mrs. Veronica Valencia-Sarukhan. The Meridian Spring Garden Benefit features a different Embassy partner each year and offers regional cuisine, live music, and dancing for over 300 guests who gather to support Meridian's leadership and idea exchange and diplomacy initiatives.

This year, Ambassador Sarukhan and his wife Veronica welcomed leaders from the diplomatic corps, Congress, and the business community, to celebrate Mexican culture and gastronomy, and specifically the State of Yucatán. This year's benefit also honored The Hon. James Jones, former US Ambassador to Mexico, as he stepped down from years of dedicated service as Meridian's Chairman of the Board.



Visit the website



SUPPORTING MERIDIAN

Contributions to Meridian help support our work to strengthen international understanding through the exchange of people, ideas and culture - critical factors in America's national interests and long-term security and prosperity.

Individuals and companies can support Meridian's mission in a variety of ways:



The Campaign for Meridian at 50

The James R. Jones Fund for Meridian raises funds to restore and preserve Meridian's facilities and ensure that our programs continue to provide world leaders with an innovative forum for public and cultural diplomacy.

Meridian Corporate Council

The Meridian Corporate Council is a distinguished group of international business leaders who are at the forefront of private sector efforts to strengthen global leadership and collaboration. Council membership provides frequent access and exposure to Meridian's global network, which includes members of the U.S. Congress, the Administration, the international diplomatic community, NGOs, media companies, peer companies.

Meridian Council and Friends of Meridian

Council Members access the unique vantage point that is offered by Meridian's government, diplomatic, policy and cultural network. Friends of Meridian, as individuals, support Meridian at a variety of levels, and participate in many of Meridian's programs and events.

Annual Meridian Ball

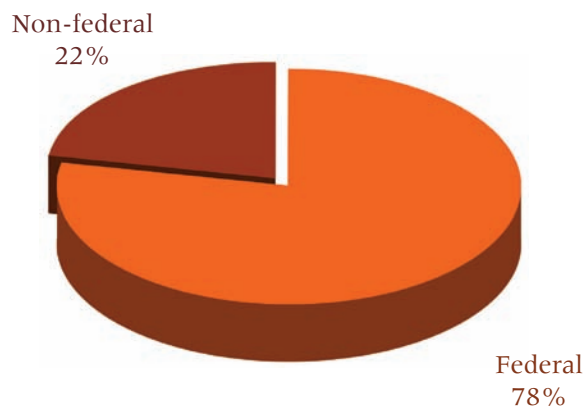
Washington's premier diplomatic gala, the Meridian Ball welcomes the diplomatic corps, government officials, leaders in industry and private citizens to Meridian House to raise awareness and funds for its work.

The Meridian Award for Public Diplomacy

Each year Meridian recognizes a public sector and a private sector organization from the U.S. and abroad with an award for international collaboration. Recipients are chosen on the merits of innovation, creative partnerships and results.

For more information,
call 202.292.2288

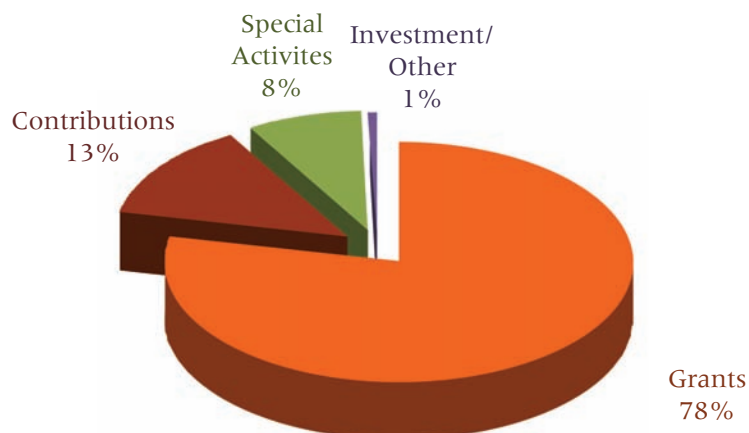
FY 2009 Revenue and Expense Breakout



FINANCIALS

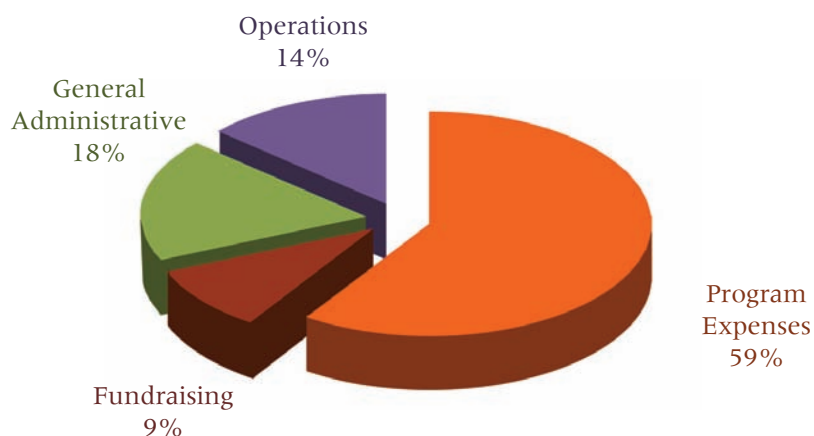
Revenue by SourceFY 2009

Federal.....	\$21,708,663
Non-federal	\$6,038,870
Total	\$27,747,533



Total Revenue net of Pass Through FY 2009

Grants	\$8,883,544
Contributions.....	\$1,489,673
Special Activites.....	\$890,570
Investment/Other	\$64,736



Total Expenditures net of Pass Through FY 2009

Program Expenses.....	\$6,985,200
Fundraising	\$1,120,643
General Administrative	\$2,103,040
Maintenance and Operations	\$1,618,995

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Meridian International Center is grateful for the extraordinary generosity of our benefactors who support our work to strengthen international understanding through the exchange of people, ideas and culture.

Meridian is grateful to those who have contributed to the Walter and Isabel Cutler Endowment for World Affairs.

Meridian also thanks our many members, who support the institution.

Honoring contributing corporations, individual private donors, private foundations and trusts from the past fiscal year, which ended on September 30, 2009.

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