

INSIDE THE FOREIGN SERVICE: INSIGHTS INTO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DIPLOMACY CAREERS FROM A JUNIOR OFFICER

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Jaimee M. Neel

VICE CONSUL, U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL SHANGHAI, CHINA

Jaimee M. Neel has been serving as a consular officer in Shanghai, China, since 2007, where she managed the Fraud Prevention Unit and the American Citizens Services section. In her various roles, Neel helped to extradite a U.S. felon back to China, as well as work with Chinese police to break up an underground ring smuggling Chinese people. She is half of a tandem Foreign Service couple, and has been married to fellow economic officer James P. Neel for eight years, during which she accompanied her husband to Sao Paulo, Brazil, and worked in the U.S. Consulate for two years before joining the Foreign Service in 2006 as a public diplomacy officer. Neel was awarded the prestigious Secretary of State's Award for Volunteerism Abroad in 2005 for her work with a Brazilian orphanage, and a Meritorious Honor Award in 2009 for her contributions to the U.S. Mission in China. She speaks Mandarin and Portuguese and will begin Arabic studies this fall in preparation for her next

assignment to the U.S. Embassy in Cairo (2010–12). Born in Kahuku, Hawaii, Neel comes from a rich heritage of Filipino, Hawaiian, Chinese, and Caucasian on the North Shore of Oahu. Her family later moved to San Diego, and she attended Brigham Young University—Provo on a full scholarship majoring in political science. While in college, Neel reconnected with her Polynesian roots while participating with the Living Legends performance group, which showcases Polynesian, Hispanic, and Native American song and dance. Following graduation and a mission in Taiwan, Neel returned to study law at BYU, where she first learned of the Foreign Service during a summer law program in Shanghai. After graduating from BYU, she taught English as an inner-city schoolteacher in Washington, D.C., with the Teach For America program. The Neels are parents of two young children.

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