

ADREAN SCHEID

Featured Alumna

Current location: Washington, DC

Dialogue Role: Program Associate, Central America, 1997-1999



What is your occupation or most recent work experience?

I am currently a Principal International Policy Advisor at Arnold & Porter, where I draw on my corporate affairs and global public policy experience to provide strategic counsel across a range of policy, trade and investment, and commercial issues.

What has surprised you most about your career?

When I first started my career doing grassroots development work in Nicaragua, I knew my love for Latin America and the Caribbean would guide my professional life but I never imagined the diverse path my career would take. I moved from international development work to think tanks to industry associations and finally to the private sector, always focusing on new opportunities that would help me grow and develop my skills and abilities and where I felt I could make a positive contribution.

What advice would you give to a young professional?

The best advice I have for young professionals is to get a mentor and be a mentor. The mentors I have had throughout my career have not only provided invaluable professional advice and guidance, but have encouraged me to set and achieve ambitious goals. I believe their support has helped drive my success and has made me feel more satisfied with my career and my life. Equally important is to seek out opportunities to do the same for others - don't underestimate the value of what you have to offer, you can be a mentor at any stage in your career.

What was your most impactful Dialogue moment/experience?

During my time at the Dialogue, the second meeting of the Sol M. Linowitz Forum was convened and it was all hands on deck with the junior staff. While we were there to work, we were thrilled with the opportunity to be in the room with former presidents, ministers, legislators, private sector leaders, and academics as they discussed the critical issues facing the region and developed concrete proposals for action. During a break in the discussions, I was waiting in line for the ladies room and a former head of state walked up and examined the line with serious deliberation. Her pronouncement that "this is the sign of a great meeting - a line for the ladies room" produced a collective chuckle but it was an important moment that has stuck with me over the years. Each woman in line had overcome considerable challenges to be there that day, and each was keenly aware that despite their success there were more challenges ahead for them and for other women following in their footsteps. I was proud that day to work for an organization that made an early and deliberate commitment to being fully inter-American and incorporating more diverse groups into its Board, membership, staff and its work. This commitment - embraced by senior leadership and implemented over the span of many years by Joan Caivano and countless staff members - is in my opinion a key driver of the Dialogue's success and credibility and an important area for continued focus and progress moving forward.