

## Council Announces new President and Ambassador in Residence

**August 5, 2011** - Ambassador Heather Hodges, a Lakewood native and 1964 graduate of Magnificat High School, is coming home after a career in the foreign service to run one of America's oldest and most respected councils on world affairs. Ambassador Hodges has been announced as the President and Ambassador in Residence for the Cleveland Council on World Affairs.

At present, Ambassador Hodges is the Civilian Deputy to the Commander and Foreign Policy Advisor, United States European Command. She is a member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister Counselor.

Ambassador Hodges was U.S. Ambassador to Ecuador from August 2008 to April 2011. Prior to that, she was the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Director General of the Foreign Service in Washington, DC. She served as U.S. Ambassador to Moldova from September 2003 to May 2006.



Ambassador Hodges joined the Foreign Service in 1980 and was assigned to Caracas, Venezuela. Following Caracas, she served in Guatemala and later in Washington as Peru Desk Officer. In 1987, Ambassador Hodges received a Pearson Fellowship to work in the U.S. Congress, where she was counsel to the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Affairs. In January 1989, she became Consul General at the U.S. Consulate in Bilbao, Spain. In 1991, she returned to Washington to serve as Deputy Director of the Office of Cuban Affairs.

In 1993, Ambassador Hodges was assigned to Managua, Nicaragua, as Deputy Chief of Mission. From August 1996 to June 1997, she participated in the Department of State's Senior Seminar, a leadership program for select members of the Foreign Service. She served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Lima, Peru, from July 1997 to May 2000 and was also Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, Spain, from June 2000 to July 2003.

Before she left Spain, the Spanish government awarded Ambassador Hodges the Spanish decoration of "Isabel la Catolica – Encomienda de Numero" for her contributions to Spanish-U.S. relations. Similarly, the Government of Moldova presented her with the Award of Honor in 2006, and the same year she was awarded a Presidential Meritorious Service Award.

In April 2011, the Government of Ecuador declared Ambassador Hodges "persona non grata" in reaction to the publication of confidential State Department cables by Wikileaks. In May 2011, she was assigned to HQ U.S. European Command as interim Civilian Deputy to the Commander and Foreign Policy Advisor.

She has a B.A. in Spanish from St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota, and an M.A. from New York University and speaks fluent Spanish.

Please join us in welcoming Ambassador Heather Hodges to the Cleveland Council on World Affairs.

An article in Sunday's Plain Dealer highlighted the Ambassador. The link to the article is: [http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2011/08/a\\_seasoned\\_diplomat\\_will\\_run\\_t.html](http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2011/08/a_seasoned_diplomat_will_run_t.html)