

IWEC Chairperson

Ambassador (Ret.)
U.S. Department of State
Washington D.C., United States

Ruth A. Davis is an internationalist who retired from the U.S. Department of State with the rank of Career Ambassador, the highest rank in the Foreign Service of the United States. Her assignments in the U.S. Department of State include Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources (2001-2003), Director of the Foreign Service Institute (1997-2001), Ambassador to the Republic of Benin (1992-1995), and U.S. Consul General in Barcelona, Spain (1987-1991). She was also posted in Kinshasa, Nairobi, Tokyo and Naples as a Consular Officer. Ambassador Davis was detailed to Howard University in Washington, DC as Distinguished Advisor for International Affairs and she served as Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor in the Bureau of African Affairs from 2005-2008.

She has received two Presidential Distinguished Service Awards, the Arnold L. Raphel Memorial Award for mentoring, the 2005 Department of State Equal Opportunity Award, the Secretary's Distinguished Award conferred by Colin L. Powell, and the International Career Advancement Program's Award for visionary leadership and fostering diversity within foreign affairs. In 2015 she was named by the Economist Magazine as one of the 'Top Diversity Figures in Public life' and in 2016 she received the American Foreign Service Association's Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy and the Link's Co Founder Award for International Service.

Ambassador Davis earned an MSW from the University of California at Berkeley. Her alma mater, Spelman College, and Middlebury College conferred honorary LL.D degrees on her. She has served as President of the Thursday Luncheon Group (TLG); and is presently Chair of the International Mission of Mercy USA; Chairperson of the Charles B. Rangel Fellowship Selection Committee; and Vice President of the Association of Black American Ambassadors (ABAA). She is on the Board of the American Academy of Diplomacy; the Board of the Defense Language Institute; Vice President of the Washington Institute of Foreign Affairs; a member of The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training; and is Chair of the International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWEC).