

Donor Profile

BOB MEISSNER

“Freedom is born in the minds of individuals and is nourished in their hearts. From those beginnings, all freedom grows.”

Bob Meissner, a dedicated member of The Fund’s “extended family”, was born in Brooklyn and grew up in Long Island, New York. He became the first person in his family to attend college when he received a nomination to the U.S. Naval Academy, and he later went on to graduate school and post graduate studies at Georgetown University and Harvard’s Kennedy School.

Bob began his career as a naval flight officer, flying off aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean and Atlantic Oceans. Immediately following graduation from Georgetown University, he became instrumental in the planning and on-scene execution of the 1983 air strikes into Grenada and the Bekaa Valley.

Meissner was assigned by the Navy to the liaison office in the U.S. Senate in 1985 and, two years later, was chosen by Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to serve as a special assistant for legislative affairs on the Secretary’s staff. He was later selected as an OPM LEGIS fellow and worked for Senator Phil Gramm (TX) as his defense advisor. He was detailed from the Pentagon to be the executive director of President Bush’s General Arms Control and Disarmament committee and retired from the Navy in 1995. He is the only naval officer to have represented the Department of Defense to Congress under five different Secretaries.

Having left the Navy for the business world, he became the deputy director of

Washington operations for Litton Industries, a Fortune 300 defense contractor, and later vice president of advanced research programs at SISCORP, a small Florida and DC lobbying firm. Bob eventually established two lobbying firms, Capitol Resources in 2002, and RM2 Consultants in 2007. He now represents over a dozen clients focused on military and medical research and advanced technologies. He and his wife Denise have been married for over 31 years and spend time between their homes in Alexandria, VA, and Ponte Vedra, FL.

Meissner was first introduced to The Fund for American Studies in 1996 when he was at Litton Industries and was asked to host an intern from The Fund’s Institute on Business and Government Affairs. After three outstanding interns, he soon realized that his desire to preserve his own individual freedoms was best served by helping a new generation of young people to be just as passionate as the generations before them about our American systems of government, economics, and our broad array of personal freedoms. He wanted these young people to understand that these systems are magnificent, yet fragile and that we all need to work hard to protect and preserve them.

As he says, “I firmly believe that the freedoms we enjoy in this country are regularly under assault from both internal and external forces. The very tenets of our freedoms, so eloquently crafted by our founding fathers, can easily be corrupted in the absence of an

informed and involved populace. If citizens abrogate their freedom to be governed in a certain manner, that freedom can easily be taken away and lost forever. But an informed populace that understands what it means to be free will never let that happen.”

Meissner says that what he appreciates most about The Fund is the interaction he has had with many of the various Institutes’ enthusiastic, highly motivated, and passionate young people. As he says, “I know our world is going to be in very good hands.”

Bob believes that The Fund’s impact on the world is already great in that it has created 40 years worth of better informed leaders and citizens, not only here in the United States, but also across the world. As he says, “Freedom is born in the minds of individuals and is nourished in their hearts. From those beginnings, all freedom grows.”

