

Mitch G. Larsen

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Present Position</u>
FS-02	Senior Commercial Officer, Guatemala and Honduras (based in Guatemala City)

Mitch Larsen arrived in July 2003 to begin his tour as the Senior Commercial Officer for Guatemala and Honduras, based in the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City. The prior year he spent in Washington, DC, initially on detail to the Office of the Western Hemisphere of the U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service, and then as a student in the Spanish Program at the Foreign Service Institute in Arlington, Virginia.

Previously, Mr. Larsen was the Principal Commercial Officer in the American Consulate General in Melbourne, Australia, serving in that position from September 1998 to July 2002. Prior to his Melbourne assignment, Mitch served for two years as Deputy Commercial Attaché and Manager of the American Business Center in the U.S. Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine.

In Melbourne, Mr. Larsen led more than a 300 percent increase in *Export Successes* for his office, as well as more than a doubling of sectoral reporting to the U.S. business community on significant market opportunities. Furthermore, he organized successful U.S. trade missions and U.S. Pavilions at major Australian trade events (including the largest annual telecommunications exhibition in the Southern Hemisphere and the Australian International Airshow). High-profile, Governor-led trade missions included the states of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and others.

As Deputy Commercial Attaché and Manager of the American Business Center in CS Kiev, Mr. Larsen led key advocacy efforts on behalf of major U.S. companies struggling to succeed in this difficult emerging market. He also coordinated hiring efforts over a two-year period, when Post experienced an effective 100 percent turnover rate among its staff of sixteen—due to rapid the changes and opportunities in this fledgling former Soviet economy. He managed Post's *American Business Center*, establishing a useful "home away from home" for American business. He was actively involved in the *Gore-Kuchma Binational Commission* and its *Committee for Trade and Investment (CTI)*, as well as commercial aspects of critical visits to Kiev by U.S. Secretary of State Albright and Vice President Gore.

Mr. Larsen joined the Commercial Service's San Francisco Export Assistance Center in January 1989. He traveled to Italy and Spain in 1992, where he led a successful trade mission of nine American companies involved in environmental and pollution control technologies. In the same year, he also spent seven weeks as a "Rotary Ambassador" in Australia, where he liaised with numerous companies and organizations concerning bilateral trade. In 1993 and 1994, Mr. Larsen represented U.S. companies at the Asian International Gift Fair in Singapore. In the following year, he traveled to Sweden, where he participated on a trade mission and represented nine Illinois companies. In previous duties with the Commercial Service, Mr. Larsen served as Acting Director of the San Francisco Export Assistance Center and Special Assistant to the Regional Director of the Western United States. Immediately prior to becoming a Foreign Commercial Service Officer, Mr. Larsen served as Manager of the Export Assistance Center in Northern Illinois (1994-95). He was employed in the Pacific Northwest as the Regional Sales Manager for two U.S.-based international apparel companies before starting his career with the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Mr. Larsen received an MBA in International Management (1994) from San Francisco's Golden Gate University, also earning a Certificate in Export Management in 1992. He received his undergraduate degree from Oregon State University in 1987, with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (majors in marketing and international business; minor in economics). He attended California Lutheran University from 1983-84. While in Melbourne, Mr. Larsen was a member of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, the oldest in Australia. He is currently an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors of the American Chamber of Commerce in Guatemala. Mr. Larsen is married to the former Charlotte Dahlgren, of Miami, and has three young children.