



Mary Ellen Taylor
Associate Director, Division of Conservatorship, FHFA

Hometown: Philadelphia

Hobbies: Travel & Cooking

Fun Fact: Years ago, Chairman Paul Volcker invited me to my first (& only) bullfight in Madrid, & my main memory of that occasion is the Chairman's repeated expression of sympathy for the bull!

How long have you been a member of WHF and what have you gained from being a member?

I've been a member for more than thirty years, and find that WHF continues to be a source of wonderful friendships as well as opportunities for professional growth. I began active involvement with WHF ages ago for the very unworthy reason that I really disliked the food at the hotel where we were holding monthly luncheons - & joined that committee in order to shift the venue to someplace with more appetizing food! I think I've volunteered in almost every capacity possible over the years – helping plan WHF's first symposium, organizing monthly luncheon speakers for several years, heading a Task Force, serving on the WHF Board and later on the Foundation Board, and as WHF President. I strongly agree with another "Spotlight" member's observation that what you get out of WHF is directly related to what you put into it.

How do you make the best use of your day?

I don't have specific techniques to suggest (& would likely benefit from employing several that others have mentioned), but for the past few years I've been greatly enjoying early morning walks with several women – some are work colleagues, & some are in very different fields - in my neighborhood. Despite our 6 a.m. meeting time, which this time of year means starting in the dark, this very sociable exercise in our hilly neighborhood is a real delight, and sets up the day in a positive way, providing perspective while deepening relationships that are very important to me.

What do you love most about what you do?

I love the chance to work with so many talented and dedicated people on matters of public policy. I've learned over time that there are many different lenses through which to view any large question, and the challenge of reconciling those is a fascinating one. It's most important to do what is right, but there are often many different ways to get there.

What inspires you?

In the midst of today's very unsettling political circumstances, I'm inspired by the creative ways in which so many young people are using their knowledge and technical skills to improve prospects for impoverished people around the globe, better utilize scarce resources and protect the environment. It shows me that the efforts to gain equal education opportunities, especially for women, continue to be crucially important.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

Work smart & hard, be open to trying new ventures, & have fun in the process. OFHEO's first Director personified those characteristics – including the 'have fun' part!

What are you currently reading?

I've recently finished *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah – a wonderful read, and am partway through Michael Lewis's *The Undoing Project*, and *If the Oceans Were Ink*, by Carla Power. I'm in two book groups now, and wish that I'd been better about finding time to participate far earlier than I did. They're a joy, on many levels. And I'm delighted to say that both of my adult sons have started book groups.

What is your personal philosophy?

I don't generally think in those terms, but what I think is important foundationally is to make the most of gifts/talents I've been given, and to treat others as I'd want to be treated.

Who do you look up to the most and why?

I so admire people who work hard to use their talents well, whether it's in the public or private sectors. My experience is mostly in government, and over years of working closely with agency leaders, I've seen firsthand the daunting challenge of implementing good public policies (especially when that would limit the financial upside for some person or group), and the personal price that leaders, and their families, pay for that privilege.