

Biography

The Honorable Joseph Cella

Ambassador Joseph James Cella served as the United States Ambassador to Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu from 2019-2021.

Cella remains engaged with the growing threat of China to the Indo-Pacific and the United States, delivering remarks, writing, conducting media interviews, and advising policy makers. In 2023 he co-founded the citizen-led Michigan China Economic Security and Review Group, that monitors, assesses, counters and reports on the threats of sub-national incursions from the PRC & CCP to protect the security of the State of Michigan, and serves as its Director.

He has over twenty-five years of experience in public service, the private sector, and non-profit work. He has advised Members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives. Cella has launched, helped to establish, and served on the boards of several non-profit organizations, and operated as a confidential advisor to various public officials, religious leaders, and business leaders.

He is the Founder and Principal of the Pontifex Group, a consulting firm whose practice areas include public policy, public and media relations, marketing, crisis management, and institutional launching and growth. Over the years, Cella has served in managerial, senior leadership, and volunteer positions in several political campaigns on the federal, state, and local levels.

He is the Founder of the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, which has welcomed presidents, chief justices, prominent religious leaders, and other distinguished speakers and guests from around the World. He is a co-founder of In Defense of Christians and Fidelis (Catholic Vote) and worked with over a dozen other nonprofit organizations, including Hillsdale College, where he earned his B.A. Cella recently received The Hillsdale College Distinguished Alumnus Award in recognition of outstanding professional achievement in the field of American Diplomacy.

Cella served as the Catholic Liaison for the 2016 Donald J. Trump for President Campaign and managed the campaign's Catholic Advisory Group. He also served on the Presidential Transition Team.

He and his wife, Kristen, have seven children, four boys and three girls, ranging from 18 years to 5 years old.

Cella and his family were the largest family to serve in an ambassadorial posting overseas in the history of the State Department.

The Cella Family live on a small farm in Michigan.