



WORLD
AFFAIRS
COUNCIL of
ALBUQUERQUE

Member, World Affairs Councils of America

30 September 2025

A NEW START -- PROGRAM YEAR 75 !!!!

The Council's 75th program year kicked off on 1 July with plans to continue our legacy of first rate evening dinner programs on contemporary foreign policy issue confronting our country while growing several innovations the Council started over the recent past years.

RECENT DINNER MEETINGS AND THOSE ON TAP

Our first program of the quarter on August 19 brought Professor Jeremi Suri of UT-Austin who presented on "How Does Domestic Turmoil Affect U.S. Foreign Policy". In September, Matt Denman of Karios Power explained how small nuclear power sources could impact the future of international energy issues.



Professor Jeremi Suri, Ph.D.



Dr. Matthew Denman

In the second quarter of the program year, on 17 October Michaela Millender, a research analyst at The Soufan Center, will address “Far-Right Extremism is Still on the Menu: Trends in Violent Far-Right Movements”, both in the US and globally. On 20 November, the Council will host Jenny Town of Stimson Center who will update the membership on the current geopolitical situation on the Korean Peninsula and the emerging North Korean role regionally and beyond.



Michaela Millender



Jenny Town

Our Council’s Program Committee is already looking forward to the lineup of dinner presentations during the program year’s third and fourth quarters in the first half of 2025. We are immensely interested to hear from members on their interests on any of the topics below and any others that might be added for consideration.

Potential topics so far include:

- Russia in the Emerging World Order
- Water Politics and Diplomacy in Israel/Palestine
- Industrial Policy for the United States
- Democracy and Authoritarian Regimes
- India after Its Most Recent Elections
- An Update on Middle East Conflicts
- Far East Geopolitical Dynamics
- Sahel Africa in Transition
- Mexico after AMLO
- Implications of American Military Spending
- Migration Policies over Time

THE WACABQ/OASIS LECTURE SERIES

As most are aware, in April of Program Year 74, the Council initiated a joint effort with the Oasis Continuing Education Center to bring additional speakers on global topics to the broader Albuquerque community. The first two focused on the current war in Gaza and featured Dr. Paul Pillar of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft describing the American strategy for that situation and, subsequently, Dr. Amit Sadan from the University of New Mexico's International Studies Institute providing an Israeli perspective on the background to that conflict.

The Program Year 75 series began in August with a presentation by former ambassador to Thailand and executive secretary of the US National Security Council William Itoh on "China's Belt and Road Initiative: 10 Years On". We had planned for Professor Jessica Feezell from UNM's Department of Political Science to next discuss, "Foreign and Domestic Influences on Public Opinion in the 2024 Election Cycle" on 1 October. Because the vice presidential debate was then scheduled for the same evening, Oasis and WACABQ decided to move this discussion to 23 October. The updated program announcement for this discussion at the Oasis Continuing Education Center has been distributed to our membership and partner organizations. On 14 November, the Council will sponsor a panel discussion on immigration over time from legal, policy and academic perspectives.



Ambassador William Itoh



Professor Jessica Feezell, Ph.D.

The Program Committee is currently exploring additional alternative presentations for this Lecture Series. More to follow soon.

OUR HIGH SCHOOL EFFORTS

The Council continues its focus on Albuquerque area high school students and teachers -- public, private and charter -- including our mainstay program that, at Council expense, brings a teacher and up to five students to each of the dinner programs at Tanoan Golf Club. With great appreciation, it is funded by member donations directed to this program over and above annual membership dues during the annual membership renewal period.



Robanne Harrison, a world history and anthropology teacher at Monzano High School, and three of her students at the dinner lecture by Professor Jeremi Suri

In July, we also completed the first full-year cycle of our high school Global Educator of the Year program. Last year's recipient, Randy Martin then of Desert Ridge Middle School and now teaching at La Cueva High School, and our WACABQ board director for education programs, Robanne Harrison, attended the

four-day seminar on global education resources for high school teachers presented by our partner Council, the Dallas World Affairs Council. WACABQ will again sponsor this award program for the 2024-2025 school year.



Board Director Robanne Harrison and Global Educator of the Year Randy Martin at the 4-day Dallas seminar on resources for global educators

The program bringing high school teachers and students to our monthly dinner lectures and the kick off of the Global Educator of the Year program were very successful in 2023-2024. In our effort to build both of those programs, the board met with Albuquerque Public Schools Superintendent Blakey to proliferate awareness of both opportunities among public school teachers and students. Our reception by the leadership of APS was extremely positive and we are now in the process of systematically informing all high school and middle school principals and social studies coordinators about the dinner lecture and educator of the year programs. Moreover, we are exploring the potential for the APS Foundation to provide some financial support for an expansion in the number of schools who might attend each of the dinner lectures and to underwrite the Global Educator of the Year program.

Finally, members of the Council have been active over the past several years in supporting the annual Model UN program, a simulation of United Nations entities including the General Assembly, Security Council, and various international

agencies in which students from high schools select a country to represent and then role-play that country's interests in a two day session at the New Mexico Capital Building, the Roundhouse. WACABQ members who have volunteered to assist the session have found it a very reassuring experience seeing how these young citizens respond insightfully and responsibly to the tasks at hand. Council members are most qualified to play several roles in support of this program given their interest in and insight to international realities.

WACABQ'S UNIVERSITY LEVEL OUTREACH

The Council continues its relationship at the University of New Mexico with students from the various ROTC departments and the Global National Security Studies Program in programs that were resurrected post-COVID. Moreover, we continue to cooperate with UNM's International Studies Institute and the Department of Political Science, proliferating announcements of WACABQ meeting announcements.

A major accomplishment of the World Affairs Council of Albuquerque was the selection of our nominee, Ella Bodor Hatfield, as one of 25 nationwide winners of scholarships to attend the 2023 WACA national conference in Washington DC. Even more to her credit, Ella was selected as the student speaker at the conferences plenary session. This year our nominee, Naserian Olemako, a Tanzanian undergraduate student in the UNM International Studies Institute, has been selected as one of the 25 nationwide student selectees to attend the 2024 Conference in Washington in November.



Naserian Olemako, WACABQ's representative to the 2024 National Conference

THE YOUNG PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

Thanks to the generous donations of several Council members, WACABQ will be able to renew its relationship with the young professional organization in Albuquerque, Global Shapers. Two scholarships that underwrite membership and all dinner meetings are being funded by Bob and Jean Gough and Bob and Susan McGuire. The first provides a full membership and attendance at all dinner lectures for one of the Global Shapers, this year Ethan Trujillo, a student at UNM's Anderson School of Management. The second covers attendance at each dinner lecture for different members of the Global Shapers that rotates from one dinner to the next.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS IN ALBUQUERQUE & SANTA FE

Our efforts continue to grow WACABQ's relationships with other organizations in the Albuquerque area focused on international affairs. The reciprocal memberships with Global Ties Albuquerque, Global Santa Fe and the Santa Fe World Affairs Forum remain strong as does our co-sponsorship with the World Affairs Council of Connecticut book review program moderated by Jim Falk of Global Santa Fe. Keep in mind that your WACABQ membership entitles you to participate in events put on by these three partner organizations at their member prices. We will continue to forward to you announcements of their opportunities for which WACABQ members are eligible at reduced rates.

Our interactions with UNM's International Studies Institute and the Albuquerque International Association now include reciprocal distribution of each other's program announcements to the respective memberships.

More broadly, our Council has taken a leading role in the effort to synchronize the opportunities available to the community from all internationally focused organizations in the area. Referred to as the ABQ Engaged Coalition, Mike Daly from our board took the lead in creating a community-wide website that integrates information on all internationally-related events in the Albuquerque area and then

seamlessly integrates the information into the Albuquerque City Government's events calendar website ABQToDo.

SOME REMINDERS

As the Council goes forward, we encourage everyone to spread the word about Council membership among others – friends, colleagues and acquaintances -- who might enjoy and benefit from what it has to offer members and guests. We eagerly look forward to former members and those who simply have not renewed as yet reconnecting with us.

Recently, the board has initiated some new programs, resurrected several that retreated during COVID and expanded several others. It now aspires to continue to grow the breadth of what we offer to the Albuquerque community. While our financial footing is sufficient to manage our current endeavors, in order to achieve these broader aims, strengthening our finances is a must. Several board members have submitted applications for – in at least one case received – financial support from the local community. The board asks for your help with any insights or introductions that our membership may have as WACABQ creates a body of sponsors – commercial enterprises, financial institutions, professional organizations, fraternal societies and others -- that have interests in global affairs.

Please remember when you meet with friends and colleagues that the Council in the past several months has updated its web page and created Facebook and Instagram sites to assist in growing awareness of the Council among the Albuquerque community. Our Facebook site, “World Affairs Council of ABQ” is: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61551637121498&mibextid=LQQJ4d>. The link to our Instagram site is: https://instagram.com/worldaffairsabq?igshid=OGQ5ZDc2ODk2ZA%3D%3D&utm_source=qr.

LAST THOUGHTS

Congratulations and hearty thanks to Ambassador Will Itoh. A long-time member, board member and previous president of the World Affairs Council of Albuquerque, he has agreed, and the board has voted its approval, for Will to serve once more as the president elect of WACABQ, moving on again to lead the organization for Program Year 76 beginning in July of next year.

ALL THE BEST

Wishing all of WACABQ all the best for the rest of the summer. We appreciate your continuing membership and your help in growing our organization

Sincerely,

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