



June 2025 Newsletter



Dr. Liane Hentschke
Executive Director

From the Executive Director

Dear TNWAC Members and Sponsors,

June 2025 marked an exciting period of momentum and growth for the Tennessee World Affairs Council. We proudly finalized the Distinguished Speakers Series lineup for Summer and Fall 2025, featuring remarkable leaders and thinkers whose insights will elevate our community's understanding of global affairs. A preview of upcoming events is featured below, with the full schedule available on our [events page](#). We hope you will join us and take advantage of the opportunity to connect with professionals, civic leaders, and globally engaged citizens.

We are deeply grateful to our event hosts — **Bass Berry and Sims, Holland and Knight, AllianceBernstein**, and our Ambassador Corporate Member, **Pinnacle Financial Partners** — for their generous support in making these events possible.

Now is also a great time to become a TNWAC member. Membership fees will remain unchanged through December 2025, and registration for events continues at current rates, with no planned increases this year.

We are honored to welcome **Mr. Ralph Schulz**, former President of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, to our Board of Directors. His extensive leadership experience will be a tremendous asset as we continue to grow TNWAC's reach and impact. At the same time, we extend our heartfelt thanks to **Mrs. Lori Odom**, who is stepping down after more than a decade of dedicated service on the Board. Lori played a key role in expanding awareness of TNWAC and in helping to develop projects. Her presence will be greatly missed.

June also brought new energy to our volunteer team. We welcomed two new volunteers, and long-time supporter **Deb Monroe** will be organizing two upcoming events as part of our Global Eats series. If you are looking for ways to contribute, consider joining our team of volunteers and help us bring international affairs education to more Tennesseans.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and commitment to TNWAC's mission.

Explore International Careers

TRANSLATOR & INTERPRETER

Translators work with written text, converting documents, books, or subtitles from one language to another with accuracy and cultural sensitivity. Interpreters translate spoken language in real time, often during meetings, conferences, medical visits, or legal proceedings. They must have strong language skills, cultural awareness, and subject-specific knowledge to ensure clear and accurate communication. Their work is essential in diplomacy, business, healthcare, and global events.

HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER

A Human Rights Officer at the United Nations monitors, investigates, and reports on human rights issues globally. They work to promote and protect human rights by conducting research, engaging with governments and NGOs, and supporting policy development. This role involves analyzing legal and political conditions, drafting reports, and assisting in the design of responses to human rights violations. Human Rights Officers are often based in the field or regional offices and collaborate across agencies to uphold international human rights standards and ensure accountability.

Sponsor Highlight



Pinnacle Financial Partners' commitment to strengthening communities and fostering educational opportunities aligns deeply with our mission. Thanks to partners like them, we can engage more Tennesseans in global affairs and prepare the next generation of leaders for an interconnected world.

Thank you for your support!

Last Month, We Welcomed:



(2) new members



(1) new donor

Welcome our newest Board Member!



We are honored to welcome **Ralph Schulz**, longtime civic leader and former CEO of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, to the Tennessee World Affairs Council Board!

Ralph brings decades of visionary leadership and community impact to our mission of connecting Tennesseans to the world. From steering economic growth in Middle Tennessee to championing education and innovation, Ralph's commitment to public service and global engagement is unmatched.

Now serving as Executive-in-Residence at Lipscomb University's College of Leadership & Public Service, Ralph continues to shape the next generation of leaders, and we are thrilled to have his insight and energy guiding TNWAC into the future. Please join us in welcoming Ralph Schulz to the TNWAC family!

Welcome our newest volunteer!



We're thrilled to welcome **Olivia Blackmon** to the TNWAC volunteer team! A passionate advocate for language and cultural exchange, Olivia brings a wealth of experience in global education!

Fluent in Mandarin, Spanish, and Korean, she's committed to empowering the next generation to connect with the world. Welcome, Olivia! We're excited to have your global perspective and energy on board!



Guest Columnist

Global learning, international research partnerships, and international student enrollment are no longer nice to do's in the globalized world of today—they are must-do's. Colleges and universities are key to preparing students for intercultural competence and long-lasting skills of adaptability, collaboration, and communication. Those are the skills industries in the Volunteer State are seeking.

Tennessee is home to over 200 Japanese companies, the result of strong foreign direct investment (FDI) from Japan. Universities serve as pipelines for talent and innovation that attract and sustain this economic relationship. According to Open Doors data, Tennessee hosted more than 8,500 international students in the 2022–2023 academic year, contributing nearly \$270 million to the state's economy. These students enrich classrooms and communities while also forming bridges to global industries.

Through international learning and research projects, colleges and universities in the state of Tennessee catalyze cross-cultural understanding and practical preparedness. Through internationalization, higher education can secure the success of both the state and the student in the competitive, globally based economy.

The Tennessee World Affairs Council plays a critical role in this ecosystem, fostering global engagement and awareness through community programs and partnerships. Its growing collaboration with the University of Tennessee enhances opportunities for students and faculty alike to engage in international issues and build the global fluency Tennessee needs to thrive. We look forward to welcoming you at one of the many upcoming collaborative events hosted by TNWAC and the Center for Global Engagement at the University of Tennessee. Come learn about the world with us so we can act locally for a more vibrant Tennessee! See you soon!

Dr. Gretchen Neisler, PhD

Vice Provost for International Affairs, University of Tennessee

Board Member Highlight: Lori Odom



With deep gratitude and admiration, the Tennessee World Affairs Council extends a heartfelt thank you to **Lori Odom** for her remarkable 10 years of dedicated service on our Board of Directors. Lori's steadfast commitment to global engagement and her visionary leadership, especially through her work with the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, have played an invaluable role in advancing our mission to connect Tennesseans with the world. Her insight, energy, and unwavering support have helped shape TNWAC into the impactful organization it is today. Lori, thank you for a decade of service, inspiration, and belief in the power of global understanding. You will always be a cherished part of the TNWAC family!

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES



SCANDINAVIA AND THE BALTIC SEA

July 20 - July 30



CAPE COD & THE ISLANDS

July 26 - Aug 1

REGISTER NOW



Support TNWAC

As a nonpartisan nonprofit organization, our mission is to **promote international awareness, understanding**, and connections to enhance the region's global stature and to prepare Tennesseans to thrive in our increasingly complex and interconnected world.

1

Bring a friend to one of our events and encourage them to join us as a member!

2

Introduce our team to an expert in your network to join us as a speaker in 2025!

3

Encourage businesses you love to join TNWAC as a corporate member or sponsor!



DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

China's Push for Superpower Status in a World in Turmoil

Dexter Roberts (*Nonresident Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council*)



WEBINAR SERIES

The power of the Olympic brand and the geopolitics of global sport

Terrence H. Burns (*Chairman and Owner, T. Burns Sports Group, LLC*)



DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

Luncheon with Robin Quinville

Robin Quinville (*Former Director - Global Europe Program, The Wilson Center*)



[VIEW ALL UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

TNWAC 2025 Programming Goals

