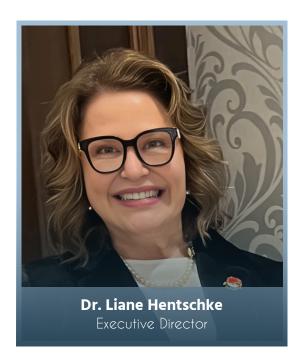


October 2025 Newsletter



From the Executive Director

Greetings from the Tennessee World Affairs Council!

The month of October was an exceptionally active and meaningful one for TNWAC. We hosted a full slate of programs: two Distinguished Speakers events, two Global Dialog webinars, and a Global Eats gathering - all of which are highlighted in this newsletter.

Through these programs, we deepened our understanding of a range of pressing global topics, including developments in the Middle East, CMA's international expansion, U.S. foreign policy, and the evolving relationship between the United States and Latin America.

At TNWAC, we are committed to *fostering lifelong learning* that enriches personal insight and supports professional growth. Thank you for being part of a community that values informed engagement with the world.

In October, we also held our Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors. We are pleased to welcome **Mr. Terrence Burns** as our newest Board Member. Terrence brings over 30 years of international leadership experience in Olympic and global sports marketing, brand strategy, and sponsorship communications. We are delighted to have him on the Board. Welcome, Terrence!

Looking ahead, we have our final Distinguished Speaker Series event in November:

 November 12 – A panel discussion on the U.S.-Japan strategic partnership, followed by the release of our Winter/Spring Distinguished Speakers calendar.

We are excited about the season ahead as we continue to bring timely, thoughtful discussions on the global issues shaping our world.

Thank you for being with us, and for helping build a more informed, connected, and globally aware Tennessee.

Jane Hulselbe

Explore International Careers

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE & RESOURCE MOBILISATION OFFICER

In this role, you'll support global development by designing and managing financing mechanisms, mobilizing resources from governments, the private sector, and donors, and ensuring funds align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). You'll develop investment frameworks for climate resilience or inclusive growth, prepare funding proposals, oversee donor relations, monitor fund allocation & impact, and collaborate with country teams, multilateral banks, and private finance actors.

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE & DATA POLICY SPECIALIST

In this role, you help national governments, regional bodies, and international organizations design and implement data governance frameworks, digital public goods, open data initiatives, and data protection and AI ethics policies. Your responsibilities may include assessing digital infrastructure readiness, advising on regulatory mechanisms, preparing policy briefs & technical guidance, coordinating between tech teams, policy-makers, and civil society, and adapting operations to emerging digital realities.

Volunteer Spotlight:



Gabriela Ledesma

Meet Gabriela Ledesma, a talented graphic design volunteer whose creativity is matched by her passion for global engagement and empowerment.

Originally from Panama, Gabriela earned her degree in International Business with a minor in Data Analytics from Illinois State University, where she served as President of the International Business Association and earned multiple top honors. Beyond her academic excellence, Gabriela represented ISU at the National Model United Nations Conference in New York, gaining firsthand experience in diplomacy and global policy-making.

Today, she channels her skills into teaching public speaking and leadership across Latin America, helping underrepresented communities find their voice and confidence. At TNWAC, Gabriela brings that same spirit of communication and global perspective to her creative work, helping us share our mission with clarity and impact.

Did You Know?

The United Nations has over **30 specialized agencies and programs**, including UNICEF, WHO, and UNDP, each addressing global challenges in areas such as health, education, climate action, and human rights. Together, they advance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals worldwide.

Sponsor Highlight

We extend our sincere thanks to Bradley for their generous sponsorship and steadfast support. Their commitment to education, civic engagement, and global awareness strengthens our mission to connect Tennesseans with the world. Thanks to partners like Bradley, we can foster informed dialogue, empower students, and prepare the next generation of leaders to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and complex global landscape.



Thank you for your support!

Guest Columnist

The views and opinions expressed in our guest column are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Tennessee World Affairs Council.



TNWAC Makes a Complex World More Understandable

The adage that "All politics is local" may have been true in the pre-internet "Cold War" era when the volume of global economic trade and the magnitude of population movements via transnational emigration were at small fractions of today's levels. In 2025, not only is "all politics" global, but so is "all economics", "all business" and "all culture". The worldwide ubiquity of the powerful computing, communication, and Al device we call our personal smartphone has further flattened the earth.

Rapid technological innovation and extensive international supply chains have swept aside former industrial and retail giants, replacing them with Amazon, Nvidia, and Apple at the pinnacle of global corporations with the highest market capitalizations. Politically, the same turbulent "populist nationalist" right and "populist socialist" left movements that are reshaping the American electorate and challenging governmental bodies, businesses organizations and higher education systems in the United States are producing similar disruptive political and cultural effects abroad. All these trends are undermining long-held certainties about the future prosperity of the American economy and the stability of the American political system.

How is this relevant to your involvement with the Tennessee World Affairs Council? Well, when business or governmental policymakers in Washington, Beijing, Brussels or Tokyo sneeze (think tariffs), many companies, workers, and consumers in Middle Tennessee might catch a cold. Even TikTok influencers outside the US influence the choices of products on Nashville retail shelves or what Amazon delivers to your front door.

As a corporate attorney affiliated with a large business-oriented law firm headquartered in Nashville, I value the unique resources that TNWAC provides. TNWAC regularly hosts renowned foreign-based diplomats, scholars, and journalists, as well as local business leaders and university professors with deep knowledge of the reverberating geo-political and economic developments that inevitably affect many of my clients. In my experience, speakers at TNWAC forums and webinars delve into important nuances and insights that go beyond the headlines of the New York Times or The Economist. TNWAC programs attract a highly informed audience of accomplished Nashville-area individuals who understand the realities of global interconnectivity and share my intense interest in foreign military, political, cultural, and economic affairs. These distinctive gatherings create an unparalleled opportunity for TNWAC members to deepen and expand their professional and personal networks. The financial and personal ROI on active participation in the Tennessee World Affairs Council makes TNWAC well worth your time.

Riney Green Partner, Bass, Berry, & Sims



Board Member Highlight: Patrick Ryan

This month, we are proud to recognize Patrick Ryan, our founder and President Emeritus, whose visionary leadership continues to shape the Council's mission to connect Tennesseans with the world. In 2007, Patrick rallied a group of civic-minded individuals to establish Tennessee's first World Affairs Council, which has since grown into a respected statewide organization now hosted at Belmont University.

Patrick served an impressive 26-year career in the U.S. Navy, rising through the ranks from enlisted sailor to Lieutenant Commander, with assignments that spanned the Persian Gulf, Pentagon, Submarine Service, and overseas posts in Bahrain, Italy, and Japan. His global expertise laid the foundation for his post-military work as the founder of Ryan & Associates, an editorial consulting firm specializing in Middle East affairs. In addition to his TNWAC leadership, Patrick serves as Founding President of the Tennessee Submarine Memorial Association, and contributes to the National Geographic State Advisory Board and the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition's Tennessee Committee. His lifelong dedication to public service, global education, and international affairs continues to inspire and elevate the mission of TNWAC every day.

OCTOBER EVENTS RECAP

October was a dynamic month at the Tennessee World Affairs Council as we continued our mission to connect Tennesseans to the world through timely discussions and global insight. We kicked off our distinguished speaker series with "The Frontlines of Trade," exploring how U.S. trade policy impacts business and geopolitics. Our Luncheon with Sarah Trahern, CEO of the Country Music Association, highlighted Nashville's global influence and the power of cultural exchange.

We held two webinars in October, with the first being "Emerging Foreign Policy Doctrine," in which experts unpacked the evolving principles shaping America's role on the world stage, followed by "An Americas First Foreign Policy," which examined the balance between domestic priorities and international engagement.

We closed the month with Global Eats: The Russia-Ukraine War, where participants shared a meal and a meaningful dialogue about conflict, resilience, and global unity. Thank you to our sponsors, board members, volunteers, and all our attendees who joined us in fostering global awareness right here in Tennessee.













Discover global insights and expert discussions by visiting our YouTube channel — explore past sessions and start watching today!

Visit here

Last Month, We Welcomed:



12 NEW MEMBERS



4 NEW DONORS

This Month's Highlights

Our events unite thought leaders and experts driving conversations on today's most pressing global issues. If you couldn't join us, you can still experience the key moments in this brief video recap.

Membership 2026

Start the new year with a global perspective!

By joining or renewing your Tennessee World Affairs Council membership for 2026, you're investing in a more informed and connected Tennessee.

Your support brings world-class speakers, educational programs, and international engagement opportunities to our community, right here in our own backyard.

Whether you're a student, professional, or lifelong learner, your membership helps build bridges across borders and fosters the global awareness our state needs to thrive.

Stay curious. Stay connected.

Support global education in Tennessee by joining today!





TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES



FINLAND: ARCTIC **MAGNIFICENCE**

Dec 10 - Dec 18



EXPERIENCE THE VICTORY: NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM VISIT

Jan 25 - Jan 29



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.

- Bring a friend to one of our events and encourage them to join us as a member!
- Introduce our team to an expert in your network to join us as a speaker in 2025!
- Encourage **businesses you** love to join TNWAC as a corporate member or sponsor!

TNWAC Events







11:00am - 1:00pm

The Howard H. Baker, Jr. School of Public Policy and Public Affairs, Center for National Security & Foreign Affairs, and Center for Global Engagement & are proud to present

U.S. & JAPAN

ALLIES IN SECURITY, PARTNERS IN ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Join us for a panel discussion about global partnerships, policy, and regional security hosted by the Tennessee World Affairs Council in partnership with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Nov. 13, 2025

1 P.M. - 2 P.M.





Student Union

Room 169



21 Platform Way South - 23rd Floor

Nashville, TN 37203













Competency Awareness Competency Compet TENNESSEE WORLD **AFFAIRS**