

World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley

Celebrating Ten Years: 2003-2013

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Celebrating Our 10th Anniversary

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the founding of the World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley. The World Affairs Council network has a long and storied history. The organization traces its foundation to individuals working in the Woodrow Wilson administration who were concerned that at the end of World War I, Americans would choose an isolationist foreign policy over one of global engagement and worked to foster a grassroots, citizen involvement in international affairs. Nearly 80 years later, the Mid-Hudson Valley Council was created to further that mission and provide leadership for global thinking for students, educators, and engaged citizens in Dutchess, Ulster, and Orange Counties.

Founding President Reflects on Organization's History

Martin Charwat, former President:

The World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley was launched in 2003. It was organized by Dan Strasser, then head of the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Valkill, Martin Charwat, a former Foreign Service Officer, local professors of Political Science, Glen Johnson, Richard Reitano, and Joel Diamond, and Elayne Seaman, former Executive Director of the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Valkill. The idea behind its founding was to provide residents of the tri-county Mid-Hudson region with a forum for discussing issues related to the major international political, economic, and social forces shaping our world and to bring respected speakers to the area to stimulate that discussion. Early on, we decided to join the World Affairs Councils of America, a national organization devoted to the same goals.

Our first speaker was to be former Congressman Ben Gilman, then serving as a special representative to the United Nations. Due to a very heavy snowstorm, he could not get out of New York City to address a group of over 60 brave local souls assembled at the Henry A. Wallace Center at the FDR Library. So Professors Johnson, Reitano, and Diamond, along with Martin Charwat, stepped into the breach and conducted a panel discussion on the U.S. and the United Nations. It was so well received that the World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley was born that snowy night in December, 2003.

Since then, the organization has grown in both membership and the variety of its programming. From the beginning, it focused on bringing interesting speakers to address timely topics ranging from U.S.-Mexican relations to Russia under Putin, to developments in China, Pakistan, Africa, Brazil, and the Arab World, to issues affecting energy supplies, world health and water scarcity. Most of the speakers were suggested by members of the Board, a very engaged group comprised of academics, business persons, professionals in other fields, retirees and young people with an interest in international affairs. Some programs were sponsored by the World Affairs Councils of America or affiliated groups.



World Affairs Councils of America
Engaging Americans in Global Affairs

Typically, six programs are offered free-of-charge to the public annually and two “members’-only” programs round out the offerings. The latter are very popular, as most are held at the Culinary Institute of America and offer not only fine food but a chance for members to socialize and have a more extensive “one-on-one” with the speakers.

Over the years the focus of the organization has morphed to include a growing focus on youth education and programs directed at local teachers, both at the high school and college level. For seven years the Council has sponsored a high school team competition called “Academic World Quest” which seeks to challenge teams of area high school students on their knowledge of topics as varied as geography, current events, demographic and energy trends. Typically, 12-14 teams compete. The winning team is given an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete against winners from around the country. Teachers, too, have been beneficiaries of the WAC Mid-Hudson Valley programs. Five groups of area high school teachers participated in summer study tours to Turkey, where they were hosted by the Turkish Cultural Foundation and exposed to Turkish cultural life and history. A similar program was provided for area college faculty in Oman by the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Foundation. These programs have had a tremendous “multiplier effect”, in that the returning teachers expanded their curricula and their students’ horizons with information about cultures and countries about which little was taught previously.

Looking ahead, I would hope that the membership, now fairly stable at about 130, would grow to over 200, with expansion especially in Ulster and Orange Counties, with more programming scheduled for those counties. In addition, a recently-developed partnership with the IBM corporation to bring cultural awareness and knowledge of international opportunities in business and not-for-profit service to area high school students, will hopefully expand. Finally, I would hope that in the next decade the Council will have sufficient funding to hire a professional staff person to coordinate programs that to date have been carried out solely by volunteers. In the interim, it intends to improve its outreach by redesigning its website to include a “chat” function that will permit greater interactivity among our members and those in the broader community interested in international affairs.

2013 Academic WorldQuest

The World Affairs Council of the MHV hosted its annual Academic WorldQuest competition at the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park, NY on March 2nd. The competition was sponsored in part by IBM and the Handel Foundation. Academic WorldQuest is a global affairs and U.S. foreign policy-based knowledge competition in which over 4,000 high school students compete at the local level for a chance to participate at the national competition in Washington D.C.

Sheila Appel, the US East Regional Manager of IBM Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs, was the quizmaster for the Mid-Hudson competition. This year’s topics included the Middle East, China, Afghanistan/Pakistan, Current Events, US Energy Policy, US Education: Competing Globally, US Economic Competitiveness, UN Millennium Development Goals: Environmental Sustainability, Geography, and the Cuban Missile Crisis: 50th Anniversary.

The team of Ray Bartolucci, Graham Bass, Breanna Lechase and Aki-ko Endo representing Roy C. Ketcham High School emerged victo-

rious and earned the team an all expenses paid trip to Washington D.C. sponsored by the WAC-MHV. The competition hosted 14 local teams representing Arlington, Cornwall, Roy C. Ketcham, Spackenkill, Oakwood Friends, Poughkeepsie Day School, Washingtonville, and Kingston high schools. The event was attended by parents, teachers, and fellow students.

The upcoming National Academic World Quest competition will begin on April 27th and is to be held at Georgetown University. The event will be moderated by David Rothkopf, CEO and Editor-at-Large, of Foreign Policy magazine. The Mid-Hudson’s Roy C. Ketcham team will join over 40 other winning teams as they converge on the nation’s capitol for the weekend long event. In the past, the event has hosted ambassadors and international affairs experts to speak in addition to the competition. The students are also able to speak with university faculty about a future education and career path in international relations.

Best of luck to Akiku, Breanna, Ray, and Graham on April 27th!



Photo: Quizmaster Sheila Appel of IBM with the winning team of Akiku Endo, Breanna Lechase, Ray Bartolucci, and Graham Bass

“The U.S. Pivot to Asia and U.S.- China Relations”

The World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley and Vassar’s Departments of Asian Studies and Political Science along with The Gillespie Forum hosted Bonnie Glaser on April 2nd event for an event entitled, “The U.S. Pivot to Asia and U.S. – China Relations.” During the event, held at Vassar College, Glaser argued that the most important foreign policy issue of the 21st century will be to figure out how China and the United States can peacefully coexist as major powers in the Asian Pacific region and beyond. Bonnie Glaser is a senior adviser for Asia in the Freeman Chair in China Studies, where she works on issues related to Chinese foreign and security policy. She is concomitantly a senior associate with The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Pacific Forum and a consultant for the U.S. government on East Asia. Prior to joining CSIS, she also worked as a consultant with the Department of Defense and State.

She began her talk discussing the Obama Administration’s initial engagement with China in early 2009 in which the U.S. sought to

partner with Beijing on critical issues such as climate change and nuclear weapons. A little more than a year into office, however, President Obama and his advisors became disappointed with China's unwillingness to partner on these issues and instead focus on domestic concerns. Disappointment turned into outright frustration after China refused to implicate North Korean involvement in the sinking of the South Korean vessel, the Cheonan, in 2010. This incident led Obama to publicly accuse Beijing of "willful blindness," noted Glaser. Tensions were further increased as a result of the incident in the South China Sea in which a Chinese fisherman rammed a Japanese coast guard vessel later the same year.

Ms. Glaser then continued her discussion with the Obama Administration's "Asian pivot" or "rebalancing" in the Asian-Pacific region. She dismissed a common narrative, and Chinese concern, that the pivot is really just the U.S. attempting to "contain" China and its unprecedented rise. Glaser stated that this policy should in no way be viewed as containment and that the U.S. – Sino relationship in no way resembles that of the U.S. – Soviet relationship during the Cold War. She also stated that containment would not succeed and that all states benefit from increased trade with China. In fact, she believes that the rebalancing is part and parcel of the U.S.'s desire to have more favorable relations with China. Further, Glaser noted that, despite Chinese suspicions, the U.S. policy is not all about focusing on China. She cited the estimate that 50% of world economic output will come from the Pacific region in 2025 and the U.S. is merely adjusting their political and military resources accordingly.



Photo: Bonnie Glaser at Vassar College

Glaser recommended that the current administration needed to be realistic about its goals in the region and realize that interests will inevitably clash. One major area of contention, of course, is Taiwan and its special relationship with The United States. Glaser asserted that this is an issue that China and the U.S could go to war over. She also warned over rising tensions between China and Japan, and said the U.S. should not be willing to engage in a conflict over "rocks," referring to the uninhabited Diaoyu Islands as the Chinese refer to them and the Senkaku Islands in Japan.

Finally, Glaser asserted that the U.S. needs to be genuine about the commitments, both politically and militarily, that are made to our regional allies in light of major impending budget cuts. Further, she encouraged the U.S. to include China in the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership trade negotiations in order to engage China as a "responsible stakeholder" in the international system. Despite China's current unwillingness to take a leadership role, from Glaser's point

of view, integrating China into the existing world order of shared values, norms and procedures is critical to U.S. interests going forward. After the lecture, Glaser participated in a lively Q&A session with students and faculty from numerous surrounding universities and many other engaged Hudson-Valley residents.

Glaser noted that the unique relationship between China and the U.S. was both adversarial and amicable depending on the issue. She called the two states "frenemies."



Malaysian Ambassador Tours the Mid-Hudson Valley

Sevgin Oktay, Vice President:

We are pleased to inform you that the World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley co-hosted incollaboration with the World Affairs Council of Albany (affiliated with the International Center of the Capital Region-ICCR) His Excellency Datuk Othman Hashim, Malaysia's Ambassador to the United States and his delegation while visiting the Poughkeepsie area and the Capital Region in Albany on March 27-28.

My colleague Diane Conroy- LaCivita , Executive Director ICCR and I had met the Ambassador at an embassy reception given under the auspices of the National Conference of the World Affairs Councils of America (WACA) in Washington, DC in November 2012. The Ambassador had expressed an interest in learning about the semiconductor industry in this country with an emphasis on nanotechnology and related businesses. Accordingly, we proposed the attached program involving a visit to IBM, E. Fishkill facilities where the world's most advanced Nano-Fab resides, followed by a visit to the Albany region which Forbes magazine had declared some time ago that it could become the "Silicon Valley of Nanotech and even surpass it in economic importance." The ambassador accepted the invitation with gratitude.



Photo: Sevgin Oktay, Ambassador Datuk Othman Hashim, and PVA Group

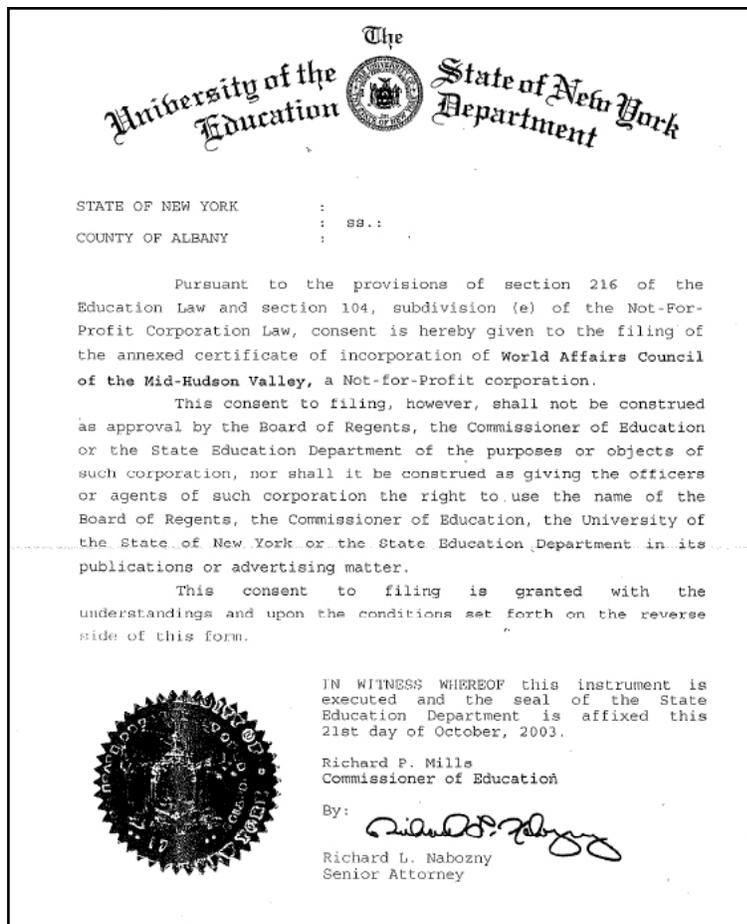
The ambassador's delegation was welcomed at IBM by Sheila Appel, Regional Director of Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs, the morning of 27 March. After a presentation of the IBM East Fishkill Site, and a luncheon with open discussion, the delegation toured the world's most advanced and fully automated nanofabrication

manufacturing line (Nano-Fab). Afterwards, the delegation drove to Albany where a welcoming reception was held in honor of the Ambassador. The following day started with a visit to the NY State Capitol where Lieutenant Governor Robert Duffy welcomed the ambassador followed by a guided tour of the fascinating Capitol building. Next was an excellent regional overview by the Center for Economic Growth group followed by a roundtable luncheon with business leaders to discuss possible collaborative opportunities with private sector and governmental leaders from around the Capital Region. Afterwards, the delegation visited the impressive PVA (Precision Valve & Automation) facilities; and to round out the very busy day with the general theme of the whole visit, the delegation was given still another tour of a nanofabrication manufacturing line, namely Fab 8 of the world's second largest independent semiconductor foundry, Global Foundries, Inc. in Ballston Spa, NY. Following the very enlightening question and answer period, the visit concluded with many thanks, photo op and wishes to meet again. The ambassadorial delegation left for Washington, DC late afternoon on 28 March, 2013.

It was evident from this very brief two-day visit that there was invaluable exchange of ideas and knowledge between the visitors and the hosts. For example we learned that Malaysia is a federation of 13 states operating within a constitutional monarchy using the British Parliamentary system. Malaysia gained its independence from the British in 1957. Prime Minister of Malaysia is the head of government, and there is multi-party system. Even the King with his ceremonial role only, is selected for a term of five-years from among the Sultans of the Malay states. Malaysia is a nation with a diverse population of about 29 million comprising many different ethnic groups including Malay, Chinese, Hindus and indigenous peoples. Islam is the predominant religion where Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity are practiced freely. The King is the leader of the Islamic faith in Malaysia. The unemployment rate hovers around 3.3%, with little or no taxes for people below a certain income level, and yet there is a totally free health-care system. And as the ambassador was asked how they managed that, he astutely observed that one should not confuse apples with oranges as the two societies are quite different from each other. At the same time, he was trying to understand how to prepare the human resources in his country for industry as it is done in the Albany region for example, through collaborative programs between schools and industry such as the case with College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering of SUNY Albany.

In a different dimension, this was an excellent collaborative work between the two World Affairs Councils in the region, namely, WAC-Albany (ICCR) and WAC-MidHudson Valley, which we hope to cultivate more. The Council seeks out partner organizations to co-host events. Recent partners have also included: The Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center at the FDR Presidential Library, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, Vassar College, Mohonk Consultations, SUNY New Paltz, Marist College, and Dutchess Community College. As a regional center for education and discussion of worldaffairs, the WAC-MHV seeks to provide leadership for global thinking, believing that a broad perspective is necessary for effective competition in the global economy and for responsible citizenship in the increasingly interdependent political world.

New York State Officially Recognized Our Council in 2003 with this Document



Are YOU following the news?

1. Who was recently elected as the new Venezuelan President?
 - a.) Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva
 - b.) Henrique Capriles Radonski
 - c.) Nicolás Maduro
 - d.) Juan Vicente Gómez
- 2.) According to the United Nations, the number of Syrian refugees as of March 2013 had reached...?
 - a.) 595,000
 - b.) 755,000
 - c.) 335,000
 - d.) 1,100,000
- 3.) Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the 'Iron Lady', recently died at age 87. Which of the following quotes is not attributed to her?
 - a.) "I am extraordinarily patient, provided I get my own way in the end."
 - b.) "If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman."
 - c.) "Power is like being a lady... if you have to tell people you are, you aren't."
 - d.) "Europe was created by history. America was created by philosophy."
 - e.) All of them

(See Bottom of Last Page for Answers)

Join Us at Our Upcoming Public Events!

Mon., Apr. 29, 7:00 p.m. Diana Untermeyer, author and wife of former U.S. Ambassador to Qatar, "Qatar: Sand, Sea, & Sky," discussion of life in that desert kingdom. James & Betty Hall Theater Dutchess Community College. Co-sponsored with World Affairs Councils of America.



Diana Untermeyer

Thurs., May 30, 7:00 p.m. Karen Malpede, playwright, on her play "Extreme Whether." readings and talk with playwright. Kondysar Room, 2023 Hancock Center, Marist College.

Wed., Jun. 12, 6:00 p.m. Members'-only dinner. Geeta Desai, Organizational Development Consultant and scholar on women's issues, "Sacred Cows and High Tech Businesses: Assessing the Effects of Globalization on Indian Women" American Bounty Room, Culinary Institute of America. Talk in Eco-Lab Theater.



Karen Malpede

For more, visit: www.hvworldaffairscouncil.edu

Membership Options

Join Us! Meet and exchange ideas and questions with people in the region who share an interest in international issues. The World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley is an all volunteer organization. Membership directly supports the educational programs and activities which bring nonpartisan, lively information about critical issues facing our nation and the world.

Student	\$5	Not for Profit	\$100
Educator	\$35	Displomat	\$250
Single	\$50	Envoy	\$500
Dual	\$70	Consul	\$1,000
Sponsor	\$100	Ambassador	\$2,500
Leader	\$250		
Patron	\$500		
Benefactor	\$1,000		

Benefits of Membership:

- Deepen your understanding of international issues that touch our lives as professionals, citizens, and students
- Connect and network with experts and like-minded individuals in the Hudson Valley who are seeking to expand their knowledge and understanding of global affairs
- Invitations of public lectures, youth activities programs, and other events
- Invitations at reduced cost for Members-Only Dinners at the Culinary Institute of America
- Receive advance notice of all WACMHV activities through email
- Receive advanced copies of the quarterly WACMHV Newsletter
- Invitation to special pre-event receptions for Patrons, Benefactors, and Organization Members
- Through WACA, special rates on publications from *Foreign Affairs*, *World Policy Journal*, and books from Brookings and other publishers