

Fall 2015



Board Member Spotlight:

Dr. Jeffrey M. Lacker

Jeffrey M. Lacker, President and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond since 2004, has a long career of public service. After completing degrees in Economics from Franklin & Marshall College and the University of Washington, he pursued major academic achievements, including teaching at The College of William & Mary, serving as a visiting scholar at the Swiss National Bank, and authoring articles in a variety of professional journals.

In addition to serving as President of the Federal Reserve, Mr. Lacker serves on the University of Richmond board of trustees, the executive committee of Venture Richmond, and the advisory boards of ROSMY and Junior Achievement of Central Virginia. The World Affairs Council welcomes Mr. Lacker's expertise and unmistakable commitment to the Richmond community.



September: "The Iran Nuclear Deal: Boon or Bane?"

On September 8, the Council hosted a panel discussion on the recent Iran nuclear deal, forged between Iran and world powers in July, which began the process of lifting UN sanctions on Iran in exchange for a cease to the country's controversial nuclear weapons program.

The panelists included:

- Dr. Sheila Carapico, a Professor of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Richmond, who studies politics and diplomacy in the Middle East;
- Dr. Scott Harrop, a lecturer in the Department of Middle Eastern & South Asian Languages & Cultures at the University of Virginia, whose area of expertise is Iran;
- Dr. Todd Sechser, an Associate Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia, who specializes in international security issues and the strategic effects of nuclear weapons;
- Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, a Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Government and Public Policy at the College of William & Mary, with experience working for the U.S. Department of State and the Army.

Dr. Peter Smallwood, an Associate Professor of Biology at the University of Richmond and an active Council member, who works in science diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa, served as the moderator for the panel discussion.

The panel explored the consequences of the deal for the US, Iran, Israel, and other affected countries, and whether the deal is a better or worse course of policy than alternative recommendations and the previous status quo.

The program was attended by 138 people, including 47 students from Richmond high schools and universities, who thoroughly enjoyed the exhilarating and thought-provoking discussion on whether the deal is ultimately a boon or bane for the world. Some members, such as Carol David, remarked afterwards that the panel discussion helped showcase the Iran nuclear deal in a more positive light for them.

Missed the program? Hear [an audio recording](#) of the panel discussion from WCVE Forum on our website.

September: “The Never-Ending Peace: How Bosnia Became Stuck in the Dayton Accords”

On September 23, the Council co-sponsored with the University of Richmond to host a lecture on Bosnia, presented by Dr. Florian Bieber, professor of Southeast European history and politics and director of the Centre for Southeast European Studies at the University of Graz, Austria. He is the editor of *Contemporary Southeastern Europe* and also the coordinator of the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group.

Dr. Bieber spoke about the Dayton Peace Accords, which put an end to three-and-a-half years of a devastating and genocidal war, and how it impacted Bosnian society and culture.

October: “The Rise, Rule, and Future of the Islamic State”

On October 13, the Council hosted a lecture on ISIS, presented by Dr. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and CEO of Valens Global, a consulting firm that assesses the challenges posed by violent non-state actors.

66 attendees came to the event, including 34 students from Richmond high schools and universities, who all enjoyed the lively and engaging lecture delivered by Dr. Gartenstein-Ross.

One young man in particular, a middle school student named Jackson Spasojevich, engaged Dr. Gartenstein-Ross in a conversation to solicit the speaker’s advice for his Model UN Club at school.

Missed the program? Hear [an audio recording](#) of Dr. Gartenstein-Ross’engaging lecture from WCVE Forum on our website.

December: “Al Qaeda and ISIS: Which is the Greater Danger?”

On December 14, the Council hosted a lecture on Al Qaeda and ISIS, presented by Dr. Mary Habeck, a Visiting Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

114 attendees came to the event, including 28 students from Richmond high schools and Virginia universities.

Dr. Mary Habeck discussed the vision and ideology of terrorism as well as the important differences between Islam, Islamism, and extremist groups such as Al Qaeda and ISIS. She also spoke in depth on Shari’a legal principles and political-military strategies to spread jihadism and threaten the West.

November: “The Refugee Crisis and the Fear of the Other in Central Europe”

On November 4, the Council hosted a lecture on the ongoing migration crisis in Europe, presented by Dr. Elżbieta Goździak, a Research Professor at the Institute for the Study of International Migration at Georgetown University.

Dr. Goździak spoke to the audience about the importance of understanding the plight of refugees escaping turmoil in Africa and the Middle East and integrating them within our communities as Western countries struggle to cope with the massive influx.

81 people attended the program, including over 33 students from Richmond high schools and universities.

November: “Syria – An Analysis”

On November 17, the Council hosted a lecture on the ongoing crisis in Syria, presented by Ribal al-Assad, Founder and Director of the Organisation for Democracy and Freedom in Syria, and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s first cousin.

126 attendees came to the event, including 61 students, and many offered profuse praise for the timely program, given the ISIS terrorist attack in Paris the previous week. *The Richmond Times-Dispatch* interviewed Mr. al-Assad to discuss how the threat of Islamic extremism should be dealt with.

Mr. al-Assad discussed the complicated issues plaguing Syria, the dire threat posed by the Islamic State, the need to combat it with international allies in the region, and the other countries accepting Syrian refugees.

Missed the program? Hear [an audio recording](#) of our speaker’s talk from the WCVE Forum on our website.