

Spring 2016



Board Member Spotlight: Dr. Thomas A. Silvestri

Mr. Thomas A. Silvestri served as President and Publisher of the Richmond Times of Dispatch. He is past President of the VCU School of Business Alumni Board and the Virginia Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. Mr. Silvestri received a Bachelor of Arts from Pace University and holds a Masters in Business Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University.



Silvestri has done a lot in his 35+ year career, including working as a stringer, reporter, copy/line editor, business editor, deputy managing editor, division staff executive, the president of a community newspaper group, publisher of a mid-size newspaper, and vice president of a regional group.

February: "Russia- An Enigma"

On February 10, the Council hosted a lecture on Russian foreign policy presented by Dr. Allen Lynch, a professor of International Relations and Russian Studies at the University of Virginia. Dr. Lynch has also served at Columbia University and the Institute for East-West Security Studies.

Dr. Lynch gave a lively talk about Russia's political and economic status, with a particular focus on Vladimir Putin's approach to U.S.-Russia relations, which he researched extensively for his book, *Vladimir Putin and Russian Statecraft*.

The program had outstanding attendance; over 160 members, guests, and local students joined.

March: "Turkey's Role in the Shaping of a New Middle East"

On March 30, the Council hosted a lecture on Turkish foreign policy presented by Dr. Sinan Ciddi, the Director of the Institute for Turkish Studies at Georgetown University. Dr. Ciddi has also served as a Country Analyst at the Economist Intelligence Unit and as the head of the Turkish Studies program at the University of Florida.

Over 139 members, guests, and local students attended the event.

April: "The China Effect"

On April 21, the Council hosted a lecture on China and its effect on the global economy, presented by Dr. Vincent Wei-cheng Wang, a Professor of Political Science and an Associate Dean at the University of Richmond. He recently assumed a position as the new Dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences at Ithaca College in New York. Dr. Wang has conducted research or taught at universities in five countries, testified before Congress, and served as a Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

75 attendees came to the event, including 28 students. Many praised the program, which included an engaging Q&A opportunity with Dr. Wang.

May: "India at the Global High Table"

On May 10th, Howard and Teresita Schaffer gave an enlightening lecture on South Asian affairs hosted by The Council. The lecture highlighted key points from *Global High Table: The Quest for Regional Primacy and Strategic Autonomy*, a book coauthored by the speakers.

Howard B. Schaffer is an adjunct professor at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. During his 36-year tenure in the U.S. Foreign Service, he served as Ambassador to Bangladesh, political counselor at US embassies in New Delhi and Islamabad, and was twice Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs. Ambassador Schaffer has a BA from Harvard College and has done graduate work at Columbia and Princeton. He speaks Hindi, Urdu and French, and has studied Bangla.

Teresita C. Schaffer is a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and serves as a Senior Adviser to McLarty Associates, a Washington-based international strategic advisory firm. She had a distinguished career at the State Department serving as the U.S. Ambassador in Sri Lanka, Director of the Office of International Trade, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East and South Asia, and Director of the Foreign Service Institute. She received a B.A. from Bryn Mawr College and studied at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris. She did graduate work in economics at Georgetown University. She speaks Hindi, Urdu, French, Swedish, German, and Italian and has studied Bangla and Sinhala.

The program had 62 members, guests, and local students attend.

February: Academic WorldQuest 2016

Congratulations to this year's Richmond Regional Academic WorldQuest winners from Maggie L. Walker Governor's School!

Thousands of high school students participate in Academic WorldQuest, a nationwide competition where teams of four answer questions about international affairs, current events, geography, world history, and culture. World Affairs Councils around the United States sponsor Academic WorldQuest competitions every year. If a team wins their local competition, they get the chance to represent their school, city, and local WAC chapter in the national competition in Washington DC.

The National Academic WorldQuest competition included teams from Florida, New York, and Virginia. The World Affairs Council of San Antonio, TX sponsored the Keystone School, who won first place in the competition. Activities such as receptions at embassies speeches from ambassadors, and opportunities to meet with university faculty about career about careers in international relations were provided by the national Council during the competition.

Topics for this year's Academic WorldQuest included NATO, Asia Matters for America, the Arctic, food security and privacy in the digital age.

