

Naples Council on World Affairs



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NEWSLETTER

March 7, 2023

President's Letter



Jim Schmotter
NCWA Board President

As we head into the home stretch of NCWA's season, I'd like us to take a moment to consider our mission statement, especially the part that refers to educating the

and the other evoking years of trench warfare similar to the First World War.

We've learned not to expect Germany to be a leader in NATO, but a valuable follower. We've learned that long-time US partners in the Middle East are simply following national interests, a common statecraft strategy, in their lack of enthusiasm for support for Ukraine.

Closer to home, we've learned that noteworthy speakers still enjoy traveling to Naples to address our membership. We've learned that our post-Covid return to face-to-face interaction for Great Decisions sessions and for special programs like our National War College seminar has proven very popular.

We've also learned that more than half of NCWA's members prefer to livestream our lectures from their

community on “critical global issues.” Put simply, what have we learned from Naples Council’s programs and volunteering experiences up to this point in the 2022-2023 season?

From this year’s lecture series, we’ve learned that Mexico is a more important trading partner for the US than China. We’ve learned that China, while an outward-facing adversary, continues to have serious internal concerns about its population.

We’ve learned how two acknowledged experts on global affairs can come up with diametrically opposing predictions about the war in Ukraine, with one predicting its end by the summer

homes.

Finally, the numbers of students applying for our summer high school programs and participating in our Model UN conference demonstrate that the young people of Southwest Florida have a strong interest in world affairs, and we can address it.

These lessons will help us plan for 2023-2024 and make adjustments that will maintain our relevance and continue to serve our members with the highest quality experiences possible. Thanks for your participation in and support for that endeavor.

Jim Schmotter
President

Member Enrollment is Open for 2023-2024 Season

Membership renewal is under way for the 2023-24 NCWA season, which begins July 1, 2023.

Renewal for Full Memberships (both individual and family) is open until March 15. After March 15, any available lecture seats will be offered to Associate Members. The lecture schedule will remain at 3:45 or 7:30 pm, mostly on Mondays, held in person at Moss Hall in Moorings Presbyterian Church, via livestream, or in subsequent recordings posted on our website.

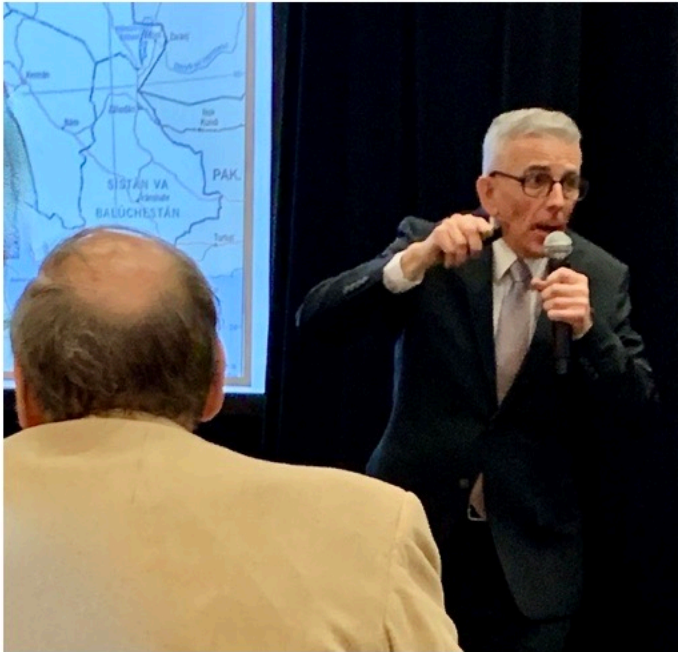
After March 15, enrollment will open for the NCWA Great Decisions program, first for members wishing to enroll in their existing groups and subsequently for all. As with this season, there are no plans for Zoom attendance at Great Decisions meetings.

Contributions to support our high school summer scholarships, the Academic World Quest program for middle school and high school students, and the Model UN competition will continue to be welcome. Members donating \$250 or more will become part of the President's Club, allowing them to attend luncheons with speakers during the lecture season.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Full Membership (Individual): \$140
Full Membership (Family): \$250
Associate Membership
(Individual): \$ 50
Associate Membership
(Family): \$ 75
Great Decisions Fees: No change

War College: Considering an Uncertain Future



Dr. John Mark Mattox draws a nervous laugh from the audience when he shows a map projecting that North Korean missiles may already have the range to strike here in Collier County.



Dr. Mariya Omelicheva reflects on the evolution of Russian culture and state of mind as she discusses unknowns in Russia's war against Ukraine. Also on the platform is NCWA member Bob Haffa, a graduate of the War College, and seated at far right is Dr. Jaimie Orr, dean of faculty and academics of the War College.

National Security Strategy: The Knowns and Unknowns

Many unknowns lie ahead as the Russian war against Ukraine grinds on and our vulnerabilities become more apparent, a group of national security experts said during NCWA's eighth biennial War College program. The future is hard to forecast very far in advance, they said.

Dr. Mariya Omelicheva described the complexities of the Russian culture of longing for lost power and said when we look beyond the war's end in Ukraine, we must consider what the aftermath would look like, noting that societies sometimes splinter after war ends.

Dr. Richard Andres described how largely unnoticed U.S. cyberwar techniques have been successful and that Russian attempts to copy them have not succeeded in Ukraine. The critical infrastructure of the U.S. is very vulnerable because private corporations that provide much of American power and other utilities rely too heavily on a vulnerable internet, he said. Our satellites, including StarLink placed in orbit by Elon Musk and used heavily by Ukraine, are vulnerable to orbital nuclear attack, as well.

Dr. Jaimie Orr explained the complexities of international law

that make it difficult to hold Putin and his leaders accountable for war crimes but expressed some degree of optimism based on recent changes to U.S. law that would make it easier for the U.S. to claim jurisdiction over war criminals.

Dr. Dawn Murphy discussed the tools of international power used by China and its challenges to the "liberal international order," meaning the norms of non-autocratic states.

Dr. John Mark Mattox compared the relative threat to the U.S. of Iran and North Korea and concluded North Korea's potential developments in ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons merit the most attention.

Navy Captain Trent Hesslink described scenario planning methods and training that leaders are given to improve their ability to forecast geopolitical events. He teaches leaders that their biases interfere with their ability to forecast the future and how to look beyond their personal views to improve their ability to plan. Because there are so many variables, probably the best that anyone can forecast with accuracy is about 400 days, he said.

A Stimulating and Relevant Lecture Season



*Mimi Gregory
Vice President
for Programs*

Our lecture series headed south as Washington's Birthday provided us with an extra holiday that we filled with an assessment of "AMLO," Andrés Manuel López Obrador, President of Mexico.

Duncan Wood, whose email handle is "Aztec-Duncan," came to Naples from the Wilson Center and, as a 17-year past resident of Mexico, gave us a clear picture of AMLO's popularity (65%) and a glimpse of future leadership.

We are recovering from an all-day Biennial Seminar, our eighth, presented by the Naples Council

and the National War College, during which big doses of learning were delivered by six experts on current events -- China, cyber, human rights, Russia and Ukraine, topped off with a tutorial on forecasting that is a tool we should all learn to use! The echos of the day will remain with us for a long time!

"SOWING CHAOS: A HARVEST OF DISCONTENT"

Dates and speakers remaining on this season's schedule are:

- **Monday, March 6 -- Caitlin Welsh**, Director, Global Food Security Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies: "Food Security Impact in the Wake of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine"
- **Monday, March 20 -- Sheila A. Smith**, Ph.D., John E. Merrow Senior Fellow for Asia-Pacific Studies, Council on Foreign Relations: "The Quad in the Indo-Pacific"
- **Monday, April 3 -- Bilal Wahab**, Ph.D., Wagner Fellow, Washington Institute for Near East Policy: "Behind the Earthquake's Curtain"

Please [Click Here](#) to view videos of previous lectures posted on our website.

Model UN Competition at FGCU Will Be March 6-7



Kathleen Hessert



Caitlin Welsh

By ALAN VAN EGMOND
Model UN Chair

The Southwest Florida Model United Nations (SWFLMUN) competition is scheduled March 6-7, co-hosted by NCWA and Florida Gulf Coast University. The Model UN program also will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a video history of NCWA's support for Model UN and the positive impact on generations of high school students.

Kathleen Hessert, CEO of Communication Concepts and Sports Media Challenge, a national brand-building and reputation management consultancy, will speak at a noon luncheon on Monday, March 6 on one of two programs in Ukraine supported by NCWA, Move Ukraine/Kids Konnect Ukraine.

Caitlin Welsh, director for the global food security program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and NCWA's lecturer on March 6, will address the Model UN delegates on global food insecurity at noon on Tuesday, March 7.

Also on March 7, **Hanna Nussair**, a former SWFL MUN competitor now working with the United Nations Foundation, will deliver the keynote speech at the 3:30 pm closing ceremony, after which



Hanna Nussair

awards will be presented.

The many awards presented in the program are funded by NCWA and generous donors, and many alumni of SWFLMUN and current MUN team members are serving as committee chairs. Also, more than 50 NCWA members judge for the competition and another 20 or more serve as readers and graders of position papers. [Click Here](#) for more information.

The 30th anniversary celebration will honor former presidents of NCWA and former chairs of SWFL Model UN and recognize private donors who have contributed to the success of the program. This effort is staffed almost entirely by volunteers and is the only one in the country to provide monetary scholarships and awards to winning delegates and teams.

Model UN Alumnae Now in Peace Corps in Cambodia



Andrea Bedoya, one of Southwest Florida's Model UN stars, is now teaching English for the Peace Corps in Cambodia.

Andrea Bedoya, president of Southwest Florida Model UN at FGCU four years ago, wrote to NCWA's **Mo Winograd** about her new two-year commitment in the Peace Corps in Cambodia.

After Andrea graduated from FGCU, she taught English as a second language in Seville, Spain, for two years before applying to the Peace Corps. Following is her status report:

"In October 2022, I arrived in Cambodia alongside the 30 other

people in my cohort. We spent an intense 10 weeks in the Takeo Province for pre-service training, where we studied the Khmer language, culture, teaching expectations, lesson planning, and just about everything else you can imagine.

"During training, we lived with host families and studied at a local high school's campus. On December 29, 2022, we said goodbye to our host families (so bittersweet!) and officially swore in as Peace Corps volunteers.

"I'm now placed in the Kampong Thom Province in a rural district called Baray, where I'll be teaching English at a local high school. Kampong Thom Province is in the center of country and the closest Peace Corps Volunteer is about a two-hour bike ride from me. I've spent the last two weeks observing the English classes, building my teaching schedule, slowly integrating into my new community, and drinking a daily coconut. My new host family, teachers, students, and community members are all SO kind.

"It's been an adjustment being the only native English speaker for miles, but overall I am so happy to be living here. I really credit MUN and Naples Council for helping me get here. You guys are amazing!"

Great Decisions Winding Down its Current Season

By STU SCHWEITZER
Great Decisions Chair

After two years on Zoom, Great Decisions is enjoying a bit of a renaissance. This year's topics are excellent, and the word on our discussions is spreading as signups continued for a few weeks into our eight-week season. This season's discussions will end the week of March 6.

Registration for Great Decisions 2024 will open a few days after the end of the renewal period for full NCWA membership. Current Great Decisions members will be given an opportunity to sign up for the same groups they attended this season before general enrollment in the program opens. As in the past, Associate Members will be able to sign up for Great Decisions. Associate Members who are later offered the opportunity to upgrade to full membership must upgrade to retain the right to participate in Great Decisions.

Great Decisions group leaders will hold a debriefing meeting at 10:30 am on Saturday, March 18, at Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church to share ideas for best practices and improvements in the program next season.

Judging at High School Debates



NCWA members volunteered as judges at the 2023 Novice and Varsity Finals of the Collier County Public Schools High School Debate Tournament in February. They were Mark Walchak, Alan Van Egmond, John Dean, Michael Smith and Maria Grant. Our members have assisted at debate programs at Immokalee, Lely and Golden Gate High Schools.

NCWA to Fund 13 Scholarships for Summer Study

By MARK WALCHAK
School Outreach Committee Chair

NCWA will fund scholarships for 13 high school students from Collier and Lee Counties to study in domestic and international programs next summer.

The scholarships and related travel costs will total \$72,000. The funds come from membership fees and donations of NCWA members supporting the non-profit organization's mission -- to educate, inspire and engage our community in international affairs and critical global issues.

Six students will participate in the Experiment in International Living Program and similar programs offering international study.

Five students were awarded scholarships for summer study at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Four of the five will participate in a one-week program at Georgetown's International Relations Academy, where they will learn from world-renowned faculty and explore today's global issues and challenges. The fifth student will study national security at the Georgetown University National Security & Intelligence Academy for one week.

Two students will attend American University under the Community of Scholars program, in which they will enroll in a three-credit college class on international relations designed for them.

For information on these outstanding students and who will study at which location, please [Click Here](#).

Helping Families in Ukraine



Dina, whose apartment building in Ukraine was partially destroyed by a Russian missile, receives aid from ShelterBox.

NCWA has assisted two nonprofit organizations that provide shelter for families in Ukraine with donations of \$5,000 each.

ShelterBox USA brings emergency shelter to communities that have been devastated by disaster or conflict. **Kerri Murray**, who is president of ShelterBox USA, was a Model UN guest speaker a few years ago when displaced families in Syria needed assistance. NCWA set up a Shelter Box on the FGCU

campus and also at St. John's Catholic Church, where lectures were held at the time, so that members could understand the program.

In Ukraine, ShelterBox is providing kits that contain winterized tarpaulins and mattresses, winterized clothing, high-thermal blankets, tools for repairs, solar lights, wood stoves for warmth, and cooking equipment.

The second organization supported by NCWA is Move Ukraine/Kids Konnect, part of the Applied Hope Foundation. They are working with displaced persons in Ukraine to provide shelter and other important services for the community. We are working with teachers in the Naples area to connect with students in the classrooms in Ukraine. In addition, NCWA's donation to Move Ukraine is helping to fund a hospital in Sytyi, Ukraine, for 50 orphan infant children.

[Click Here for more information on ShelterBox USA](#)

[Click Here for more information on Move Ukraine/Kids Konnect](#)

Academic World Quest and Other School News

ACADEMIC WORLD QUEST COMPETITIONS

For more than a decade, the Naples Council on World Affairs has sponsored an Academic World Quest (AWQ) at two levels in Collier County -- one for public and independent high schools and the second for middle schools. The objective of these programs is to promote student awareness of world affairs and the role that the United States plays in the international political system.

This year's AWQ competition will be held at the Community School of Naples, with the middle school on March 4 and high school on March 25.

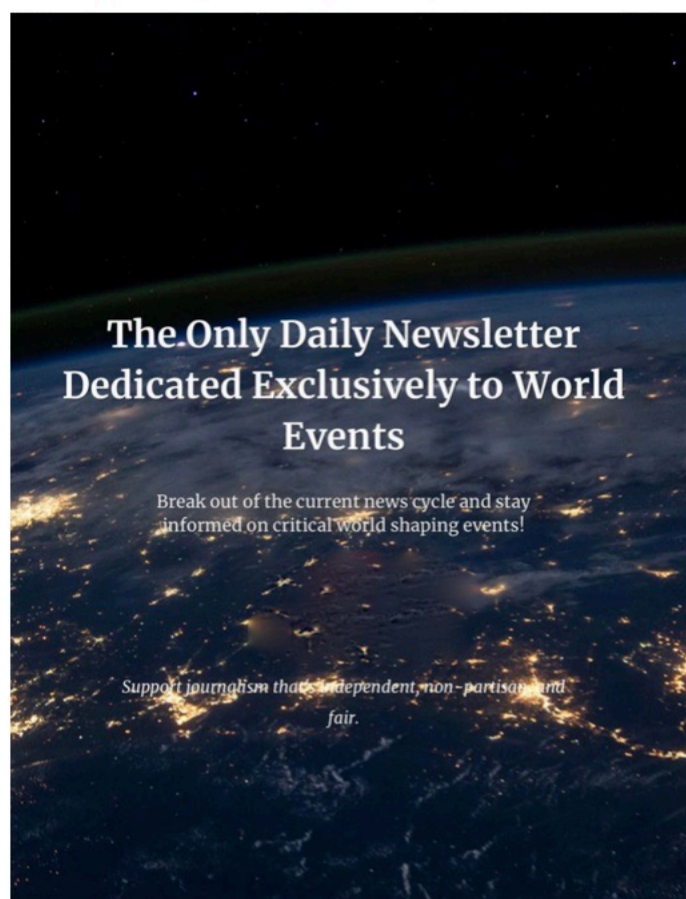
SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAM ALUMNI

NCWA's luncheon for past participants in its School Outreach programs is scheduled for April 1.

NCWA EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

The School Outreach Committee has recommended an individual to receive the 2023 Educator of the Year Award. The recipient will be announced in the coming weeks.

Don't Forget Your Gift from NCWA: *DailyChatter!*



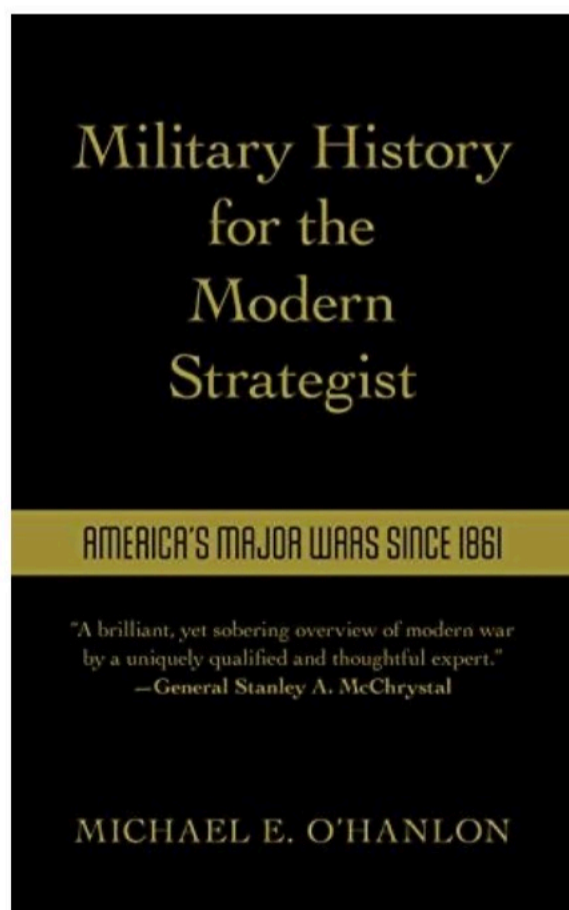
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Book Club



Exploration of topics has reached far and wide this season by members of NCWA's Book Club. Here's what the readings have been since the season began:

-- *Of Boys and Men: Why the*

Modern Male Is Struggling, Why It Matters, and What to Do About It by Richard Reeves. The growing prospect of failure for half our population has enormous sociological, economic and foreign affairs implications.

-- *Danger Zone: The Coming Conflict with China* by Michael Beckley and Hal Brands. America will need a sustainable approach to winning a protracted global competition. But first, it needs a near-term strategy for navigating the danger zone ahead.

-- *America's Great-Power Opportunity: Revitalizing U.S. Foreign Policy to Meet the Challenges of Strategic Competition* by Ali Wyne. The U.S. needs to reestablish itself as a great power independent of its rivalry with Russia and China. It must rebuild itself at home and reposition itself abroad.

-- *Kleptopia: How Dirty Money is Conquering the World* by Tom Burgis.

*For more information,
contact Book Club chair
Bill Korstad at
bkorstad@mac.com.*

-- March 7 meeting: *Military History for the Modern Strategist: American's Major Wars Since 1861* by Michael O'Hanlon, observes that war is usually far more difficult than expected, and its outcomes are rarely predictable.

Village Assistance Program

The Village Assistance Program Committee has decided not to ask for grant proposals this year because the NCWA Board of Directors has issued two grants totaling \$10,000 for Ukraine housing projects. VAP will continue to oversee a project in Tanzania, in which Naples students are helping the Tanzanian Children's Fund evaluate whether to purchase a second generator for a school or obtain backup storage for their solar system.

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