

2018 GREAT DECISIONS LECTURE SERIES
WEDNESDAYS, FEB. 7th THROUGH MARCH 14th, 2018
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
THOMAS AUDITORIUM
BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 7th **Turkey: a Partner in Crisis by Tom Sanders**

Of all NATO allies, Turkey represents the most daunting challenge for the Trump administration. In the wake of a failed military coup in July 2016, the autocratic trend in Ankara took a turn for the worse. One year on, an overwhelming majority of the population considers the United States to be their country's greatest security threat. In this age of a worsening "clash of civilizations" between Islam and the West, even more important than its place on the map is what Turkey symbolically represents as the most institutionally Westernized Muslim country in the world.

Tom Sanders holds a PhD from Columbia University is a retired professor of religious studies and of international studies. He has taught for over 20 years in the College for Seniors, UNCA, including courses on Turkey, the Kurds, Political Development in the Arab World, and Religion, Ethnicity, and Politics in the Middle East. He has visited Turkey many times, chiefly to practice Turkish with all kinds of ordinary Turks.

February 14th **Global Health: Progress and Challenges by John Stewart**

The collective action of countries, communities and organizations over the last 30 years has literally saved millions of lives around the world. Yet terrible inequalities in health and wellbeing persist. The world now faces a mix of old and new health challenges, including the preventable deaths of mothers and children, continuing epidemics of infectious diseases, and rising rates of chronic disease. We also remain vulnerable to the emergence of new and deadly pandemics. For these reasons, the next several decades will be just as important - if not more so - than the last in determining wellbeing across nations.

John Stewart grew up in Marietta, Georgia, graduated Emory University. Then entered US Navy for eleven years, during which I attended and graduated from Medical College of Georgia, interned at Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Virginia, and served as a General Medical Officer for five years. Upon completion of military obligation, completed residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at University of South Carolina. A 26 year career in private practice in Asheville followed, until retirement in 2012. Since then I have continued to work as a Buncombe County Medical Examiner, and have been able to pursue a lifelong dream of doing medical humanitarian work by serving with Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders in Africa for four to six weeks each year for five years, during which time I have experienced global health disparities first hand "in the trenches".

February 21st **The Waning of Pax America by Jonathan Tetzlaff**

During the first months of Donald Trump's presidency, the U.S. began a historic shift away from Pax Americana, the liberal international order that was established in the wake of World War II. Since 1945, Pax Americana has promised peaceful international relations and an open economy, buttressed by U.S. military power. In championing "America First" isolationism and protectionism, President Trump has shifted the political mood toward selective U.S. engagement, where foreign commitments are limited to areas of vital U.S. interest and economic nationalism is the order of the day. Geopolitical allies and challengers alike are paying close attention.

Jonathan Tetzlaff has a B.A. in International Relations, an M.A. in U.S. and Comparative Foreign Policy, and a CISSP, CBRM, and MBCI. He is a member of the World Affairs Council, the U.S. State Department's Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), the Association of Contingency Planners, and a number of other organizations. He has traveled globally throughout his life, most recently to North Korea. Jonathan's training

and presentations are global in nature: he has presented to many dozens of audiences over several decades, including the U.S. State Department, the University of North Carolina, and the U.S. Army's Worldwide Long-Range Planners' Conference, the Conference Board, CISO Executive Summit, Security 500, the National Business Aviation Association, the University of Chicago, the International Security Management Association, and the National Defense University.

February 28th Media and Foreign Policy by Jake Greear

State and non-state actors today must maneuver a complex and rapidly evolving media landscape. Conventional journalism now competes with user-generated content. Official channels of communication can be circumvented through social media. Foreign policy is tweeted from the White House and "fake news" has entered the zeitgeist. Cyberwarfare, hacking and misinformation pose complex security threats. How are actors using media to pursue and defend their interests in the international arena? What are the implications for U.S. policy?

Jake Greear is an adjunct professor of political science at Western Carolina University. He received his PhD from Johns Hopkins University, where his research focused on environmental politics and political theory. His publications include a recent article on economic decentralization, and he is currently working on a book titled *Performing Nature: Truth and the Body in Environmental Consciousness*.

March 7th U.S. Global Engagement and the Military by Rick Devereaux

The global power balance is rapidly evolving, leaving the United States at a turning point with respect to its level of engagement and the role of its military. Some argue for an "America First" paradigm, with a large military to ensure security, while others call for a more assertive posture overseas. Some advocate for a restoration of American multilateral leadership and a strengthened role for diplomacy. Still others envision a restrained U.S. role, involving a more limited military. How does the military function in today's international order, and how might it be balanced with diplomatic and foreign assistance capabilities?

Major General Rick Devereaux graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1978 and completed a 34-year career in the Air Force before moving to Asheville in 2012. While in the military, he piloted the C-5 Galaxy and KC-135 Stratotanker, commanded two wings, and served four tours at the Pentagon including his last assignment as the Director of Operational Planning, Policy, and Strategy for the Air Force. Rick is currently the Executive Vice President for Texzon Technologies and continues to do independent consulting work for the defense industry. He serves on the boards of several local and national non-profits including the National D-day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia.

March 14th China and America: the New Geopolitical Equation by Julie Snyder

In the last 15 years, China has implemented a wide-ranging strategy of economic outreach and expansion of all its national capacities, including military and diplomatic capacities. Where the United States has taken a step back from multilateral trade agreements and discarded the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), China has made inroads through efforts like the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). What are Beijing's geopolitical objectives? What leadership and political conditions in each society underlie growing Sino-American tensions? What policies might Washington adopt to address this circumstance?

Julie Snyder is a retired U.S. diplomat who worked in the field of international trade for over 30 years for the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, a small foreign affairs agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce. In her assignments to U.S. embassies in Canada, Asia and Europe, she worked on a wide range of trade issues. She has taught courses on international trade topics for the OLLI College for Seniors at UNCA and is a volunteer business mentor for SCORE. Julie has a bachelor's degree in French and political science from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree in international management from the Thunderbird School of Global Management.

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