

SWISS WITH US



NEWS & VIEWS

From the Embassy of Switzerland in the U.S.

May 2025

From the Ambassador's desk

Dear Friends of Switzerland,

Washington, DC, has woken up. After months of gray skies and bare branches, the city has burst into bloom. Cherry blossoms lined the Tidal Basin for a few days in late March, school groups have returned to the National Mall, and a spring energy has taken hold. At the Embassy, too, we feel this new momentum, not only in nature, but also in our work.

Over the past few months, we have continued to nurture the strong relationship between Switzerland and the United States. As you might have seen in the press, our team has been busy working with the Trump administration on a variety of policy issues, including concerning the recent tariff decisions of the U.S. Administration. Most notably, we successfully supported high-level discussions between U.S. and Swiss officials, including a phone discussion between U.S. President Trump and the Swiss President Keller-Sutter. We have been busy planting the seeds for future cooperation by supporting delegation visits, educational outreach opportunities, and cultural events. The positive impact can already be seen, as you'll read in this issue.

We had the privilege of hosting many different events, including the TIME After-Party following the White House Correspondents' Dinner and a meaningful panel about international tax policy. We also welcomed a class of students to share more about Swiss culture through our Embassy Adoption Program and commemorated the legacy of Carl Lutz at an event that I personally will remember for a long time. Speaking with Holocaust survivors who were saved by a Swiss diplomat inspired me greatly. In honor of Women's History Month, we also celebrated his wife, Gertrud Lutz-Fankhauser, who was a Swiss humanitarian activist and an influential figure in her own right, as well as several other influential Swiss women.

While Easter has past, in the spirit of spring we've hidden a few (digital) Easter eggs throughout the newsletter, subtle references to Swiss cuisine, puns, and images. I invite you to discover them as you scroll through the highlights of our recent activities.

Thank you for staying connected. Your continued interest and engagement is what makes this transatlantic friendship flourish year after year.

Warm regards,

Ralf Heckner



Dr. Ralf Heckner is the Ambassador of Switzerland to the United States of America.

2025 White House Correspondents' Dinner After-Party at the Swiss Residence

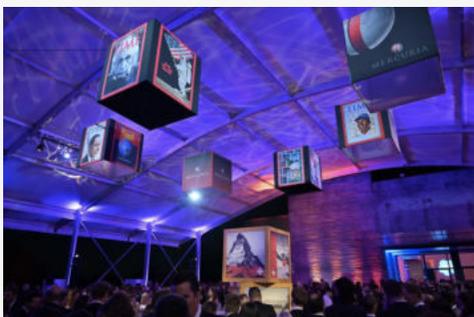
On April 26, Ambassador Heckner and his wife, Dr. Ilaria Macconi Heckner, hosted an exclusive reception at the Swiss Ambassador's Residence in Washington, DC, to honor the White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA), the organization of the journalists who traditionally cover the White House and the President of the United States.

The event was a collaboration with our media sponsor TIME Magazine, headline sponsor Mercuria, and talent sponsor Live Nation, as well as Salesforce, General Catalyst, Suntory Spirits, and Total Wine & More to celebrate the crucial role of the Fourth Estate in fostering strong relations between Switzerland and the United States.

At the event, Ambassador Heckner emphasized the importance of an independent and free press for Switzerland's democracy and the shared values between Switzerland and the United States.

More than 1,500 attendees from a wide range of fields—journalism, politics, government, media, film, music, and fashion, among others—came together to network and enjoy Swiss hospitality and cuisine.

Find out more about this exclusive event and take a look to all the pictures on [SWISS IMPACT](#).





Commemorating the Legacy of Carl Lutz

On April 2, the Embassy of Switzerland in the United States, in partnership with the Lantos Foundation and the Carl Lutz Society, hosted a commemoration ceremony dedicated to the extraordinary life of Carl Lutz, a Swiss diplomat who helped to save more than 62,000 Hungarian Jews in Budapest during the Holocaust. This year marks the 130th anniversary of Carl Lutz's birth and the 50th anniversary of his passing.

Lutz, while serving as Switzerland's Vice Consul in Budapest during World War II, negotiated protective letters and established safe houses for Jews to shield tens of thousands from deportation. Survivors Dr. Charles Gati and the brothers George and Robert Lindenblatt shared powerful testimonies of Lutz's lifesaving actions in Budapest and their lasting impact.

The ceremony also highlighted Lutz's collaboration with other diplomats and Jewish resistance groups, and the importance of remembering his courageous humanitarianism. Ambassador Heckner emphasized the relevance of Lutz's legacy today, amid rising antisemitism, and Switzerland's ongoing commitment to combat antisemitism and racism. Though Lutz's heroism was not fully recognized during his lifetime, his story continues to inspire, reminding us to act with unwavering moral courage, respect for human dignity, and conviction of our values—regardless of whether this receives its proper recognition.

If this excerpt has made you curious, you can read the full story on [SWISS IMPACT](#).



From left to right: Amy Lutz, George Lindenblatt, Robert Lindenblatt, and Charles Gati

The University of Zurich brought the Global Tax Debate to DC

On April 8, the Swiss Embassy in Washington, DC, hosted a timely panel on international tax policy, organized by the University of Zurich (UZH) and the Embassy's Economic Section. The event brought together some leading U.S. tax experts to discuss the future of international tax cooperation amid the U.S. withdrawal from the OECD/G20 global tax deal. René Matteotti, who is Chair of Swiss, European, and International Tax Law at the University of Zurich (UZH) and currently serving this semester as Global Professor of Law at NYU School of Law, was joined on the panel by Lillian Faulhaber, Vice Dean and Ralph H. Dwan Chair in Taxation (Georgetown University), David H. Rosenbloom, Director of the International Tax Program (NYU School of Law), and Catherine Schultz, Vice President, Tax and Fiscal Policy, Business Roundtable (Global Business Alliance).

The panelists highlighted the U.S. constitutional limits on adopting international tax rules and the high compliance burdens faced by businesses. They agreed that the OECD's framework for subjecting large multinational enterprises to a minimum tax rate of 15% is unsustainable under the current circumstances and called for either major reform or targeted adjustments. Professor Matteotti suggested that the OECD should pivot to a system more aligned with the U.S. GILTI regime, which, he argued, would ensure that multinationals pay their fair share—without weakening the competitiveness of European multinational enterprises.

The event at the Swiss Embassy offered a clear-sighted analysis of the situation, along with a hopeful outlook that pragmatic, balanced solutions may help restore legal certainty in the taxation of international business.

Find out more about the UZH's work and visit to Washington, DC, on their [website](#).



From left to right: René Matteotti, Lillian Faulhaber, David H. Rosenbloom, and Catherine Schultz

Swiss Cuisine Masterclass with Howard Community College Culinary Students

On March 17, the Embassy of Switzerland visited Howard Community College (HCC) to meet culinary students and leadership. During the visit, the Embassy gave a brief introduction to the Swiss apprenticeship system, followed by a cooking demonstration led by Nolan, a NextStep participant and sous-chef at the Residence of the Swiss Ambassador. Nolan taught HCC culinary students how to prepare traditional Swiss Fondue Moitié Moitié (made with half Gruyère and half Vacherin Fribourgeois cheese) and eggs-quisite Swiss truffles.

The visit gave the Embassy of Switzerland the opportunity to present the Swiss culinary apprenticeship curriculum and highlight the NextStep program, which was launched by the cantons of Vaud and Zurich in partnership with Swissnex and the Embassy of Switzerland in Washington, DC. This program gives recent Swiss vocational and educational training (VET) graduates the chance to undertake 3- to 12-month internships abroad.

Learn more about Chef Nolan's apprenticeship and his appreciation for egg-cellent Swiss treats on [SWISS IMPACT](#).



March Celebrations: *Mois de la Francophonie* & Women's History Month

March was filled with celebrations here at the Embassy, as we marked both the Month of French Language (*Mois de la Francophonie*) and Women's History Month through a series of engaging events.

To celebrate the *Mois de la Francophonie*, dedicated to promoting the French language and Francophone culture around the world, the Embassy joined other embassies and partners at *La Grande Fête de la Francophonie* hosted by the Embassy of France. Representing "la Romandie", the French-speaking region of Switzerland, the guests could test their knowledge of Switzerland for a chance to try some Swiss wine and chocolate. The *Mois de la Francophonie* was also

celebrated through the Embassy's Swiss Film Club, with a virtual screening of the French-language Swiss comedy *Kick Ball Change*, accompanied by a discussion with the film's director, Géraldine Rod.

In honor of Women's History Month, and as part of the Embassy's ongoing efforts to foster transatlantic and intergenerational connections among women leaders, Ambassador Heckner hosted a breakfast at the Residence. A number of local women leaders—including several alumni from our 2024 Women Mayors Delegation to Switzerland—joined us for an inspiring exchange on the challenges and opportunities facing towns and cities in both the United States and Switzerland.

Watch the full discussion with Géraldine Rod about *Kick Ball Change* on [YouTube](#).





The Embassy Adoption Program: from Sustainability to Zopf

Each year, the Embassy is partnered with a DC Public School classroom as part of the Embassy Adoption Program, and over the course of the year we teach the students about different aspects of Switzerland. This spring we had the chance to meet with our partner class twice.

At the end of March, our 5th grade partner class came to the Ambassador's Residence for a baking class with the Embassy's chefs. The students learned how to prepare a traditional Swiss braided bread called *Zopf*, which is beloved all throughout Switzerland and often enjoyed at Sunday breakfast tables. The students did a great job braiding their own *Zopf*.

Later in the month, the Embassy visited our partner class at their school for the second time, this time to talk about the environment and sustainability in Switzerland. Students learned about Switzerland's diverse landscapes and how the country is working to protect them by acting against climate change. They even got to exercise their creative muscles to repurpose and recycle Swiss products!

Learn more about the Embassy Adoption Program on the [DC Public School Website](#).





P.S. from Switzerland

Thank you for reading our Embassy newsletter! How many Easter eggs did you spot during your celebrations—and hidden in this email?

At the Embassy, the festivities roll on as we shift from springtime cheer to Pride preparations. This year, we kicked things off early with a Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) watch party at Spark Social House—D.C.'s first alcohol-free LGBTQ+ bar and café. While the public vote didn't favor Switzerland, the crowd in DC stayed upbeat, despite it dashing our hopes for a second consecutive win. Earlier that week, we spotlighted ESC host city Basel and its U.S. sister city, Miami Beach. With karaoke and Eurovision flair, we brought the party to the Sunshine State.

Did you catch the ESC? Who had your vote?





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