

World Affairs Council Launches Prize Gala, Positioning LA as 'Center Stage of Ideas'

September 30 event features comedian and host Larry Wilmore and honors three distinguished leaders as LA prepares for FIFA World Cup and LA28 Olympics

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, September 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Los Angeles World Affairs Council](#) (LAWAC) will host its inaugural [World Prize Gala](#) on Tuesday, September 30, 2025, at the Taglyan Cultural Complex in Hollywood, marking a transformative moment as the organization positions itself as Los Angeles's premier platform for international dialogue during an unprecedented period of global attention.

The milestone event signals LAWAC's strategic evolution as the "Center Stage of Ideas" – a dynamic forum where thought leaders, diplomats, business executives, and engaged citizens converge to address the most pressing challenges facing our interconnected world. As Los Angeles prepares to welcome millions of international visitors for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and 2028 Olympic Games, LAWAC is positioning itself to facilitate the crucial conversations that will define the city's global legacy.

"This inaugural World Prize Gala represents far more than a celebration. It is a declaration of Los Angeles's readiness to lead on the global stage," said Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet, Chair of the LAWAC Board of Directors and former U.S. Small Business Administrator. "At a time when our world faces complex challenges that demand collaborative solutions, Los Angeles must be the center stage where transformative ideas are born, debated, and refined. Our city's diversity, innovation, and global connections make us uniquely positioned to host the conversations that can change the world."



LAWAC

LOS ANGELES WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Los Angeles World Affairs Council announces inaugural World Prize Gala



Robert J. Abernethy



The Honorable Jane Harman



Dominic Ng

Robert J. Abernethy, Jane Harman, and Dominic Ng are the inaugural recipients of the 2025 World Prize Awards given by the Los Angeles World Affairs Council

The gala will honor three distinguished leaders whose contributions exemplify excellence in diplomacy, civic engagement, and international bridge-building:

- Robert J. Abernethy, entrepreneur and longtime civic leader whose philanthropic vision has strengthened Los Angeles's cultural and educational landscape
- The Honorable Jane Harman, former nine-term Congresswoman from Los Angeles and Director Emerita of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
- Dominic Ng, Chairman and CEO of East West Bank, whose leadership has fostered economic ties across the Pacific Rim

The evening will be hosted by Larry Wilmore, the acclaimed comedian, writer, producer, and political commentator known for his incisive observations on contemporary affairs and his ability to find common ground through humor and insight.

Strategic Revitalization for Global Moment

Founded in 1954, LAWAC has welcomed eight U.S. presidents and more than 250 heads of state to its programs, building an unparalleled archive of international dialogue. The organization now embarks on an ambitious revitalization strategy designed to expand its influence as Los Angeles takes center stage globally.



Comedian, writer, producer, and political commentator will host the inaugural World Prize Gala presented by the Los Angeles World Affairs Council

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"This inaugural gala embodies everything we envision for LAWAC's future – bringing together Los Angeles's most thoughtful leaders around ideas that matter," said Dr. Julian Gold, gala co-chair and LAWAC board member. "We're creating a signature event that reflects both our city's sophistication and our commitment to meaningful dialogue on the issues that will shape our shared future."

The organization's renewed mission centers on fostering informed dialogue that transcends traditional boundaries, bringing together diverse perspectives to address

challenges spanning artificial intelligence and technology, climate change, economic resilience, and global security. LAWAC's programming will leverage Los Angeles's position as the

entertainment capital of the world to elevate civil discourse to a valued form of intellectual engagement.

LAWAC's International Circle membership program offers individuals and organizations unique access to high-profile events, cultural exchanges, and behind-the-scenes insights that deepen understanding of global perspectives. Corporate partnerships provide strategic engagement opportunities across multiple sectors. For [sponsorship](https://www.lawacworldprizegala.org/sponsorship) opportunities, visit <https://www.lawacworldprizegala.org/sponsorship>

Looking Forward

As Los Angeles prepares for its moment on the world stage, LAWAC stands ready to facilitate conversations that will shape the city's global impact. The World Prize Gala represents the beginning of an ambitious agenda to position Los Angeles as the center stage for ideas that can change the world.

The September 30 gala begins with cocktails at 5:30 PM, followed by dinner at 6:30 PM. Cocktail attire is requested.

About the Los Angeles World Affairs Council

Founded in 1954 as the Los Angeles affiliate of the World Affairs Councils of America network, LAWAC operates as a nonpartisan, membership-based forum dedicated to fostering civic engagement, civil discourse, and an informed citizenry. The organization's mission of promoting international understanding and cooperation positions it as a vital bridge between Los Angeles and the global community.

For tickets and additional information, visit <https://www.lawacworldprizegala.org/> or email worldprizegala@lawac.org.

Geoffrey Baum

Los Angeles World Affairs Council

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