

DACOR Special Dinner with Damon Wilson, President and CEO of the National Endowment for Democracy, September 22, 2026

DACOR invites you to a special dinner and keynote address by **Dr. Damon Wilson, President and CEO of the National Endowment for Democracy**, for a timely discussion of **the state of democracy around the world**. **Ambassador Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., President of DACOR, will host the evening.**

At a moment when democratic institutions are under growing pressure and authoritarian governments are becoming more assertive, Dr. Wilson will examine the major forces shaping democracy today: **Where is democracy advancing? Where is it retreating? What is driving these trends, and what can be done to strengthen democratic institutions and resilience?**

Following his keynote address, **Adrienne Ross and Dr. Wilson will sit down for a fireside chat** to explore recent democratic successes and setbacks, emerging challenges, and what these trends mean for the future of democracy around the world.

Tuesday, September 22, 2026
DACOR Bacon House | Washington, D.C.

Please note this is a hybrid event - you have the option to attend in person or virtually. Registrations are required for all attendees. For in-person attendees, the event will run from 6 - 8:30 pm and includes dinner (wine and other drinks available for purchase). The live stream will begin around 7:30 pm (virtual attendees will be sent a link for the event via email).

Information on how to register for this event can be found here: <https://www.memberleap.com/Calendar/moreinfo.php?eventid=65829>

Damon Wilson is President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), America's foundation for freedom around the world, which supports more than 1,550 projects in over 80 countries to advance fundamental freedoms, justice, and human rights. Before joining NED, Wilson served as Executive Vice President of the Atlantic Council and held senior positions at the White House National Security Council, the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, and NATO. He began his career with Save the Children in Rwanda and at the U.S. Department of State.

Ambassador Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., President of DACOR, is one of America's most experienced career diplomats. During more than three decades of government service, Ambassador Shannon served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, U.S. Ambassador to Brazil, and in numerous other senior diplomatic positions. He holds the personal rank of Career Ambassador and served as the highest-ranking member of the U.S. Foreign Service.

Adrienne Ross is a journalist and international communications consultant who served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Strategic Communications and Crisis at the U.S. Department of State, as well as a senior advisor to the Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. She previously worked for several national news outlets, including Fox News Channel, covering Capitol Hill and global breaking news, and now advises clients across the United States and Latin America with Opportunitas Advisors. She is a mentor and thought leader in foreign policy, serves on an advisory board supporting women in national security, and hosts *The Washington Diplomat's Ambassador Insider Series*.

Please join us for a timely and thought-provoking evening examining the challenges, opportunities, and future of democracy around the world.

Lynn Northcutt Vega
Career Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
Board Member and Trustee, DACOR and DACOR Bacon House Foundation
Member, National Security Leaders for America
Member, The Steady State
International Development and Foreign Affairs Professional