

## Summit Addressed Transatlantic Security

*By: Allison Wolfarth-Solano, Lester N. Mandell Diplomacy Fellow*

On Jan. 30, students and faculty from around Florida heard from a series of experts at the 2018 Florida International Summit at UCF. The summit put a spotlight on important aspects of the special relationships between the United States and European countries and institutions.

John C. Bersia, UCF's Special Assistant to the President for Global Perspectives, opened the event with welcoming remarks. After challenging the audience to pay special attention to how the day's presentations would all intersect, he introduced the first speaker.

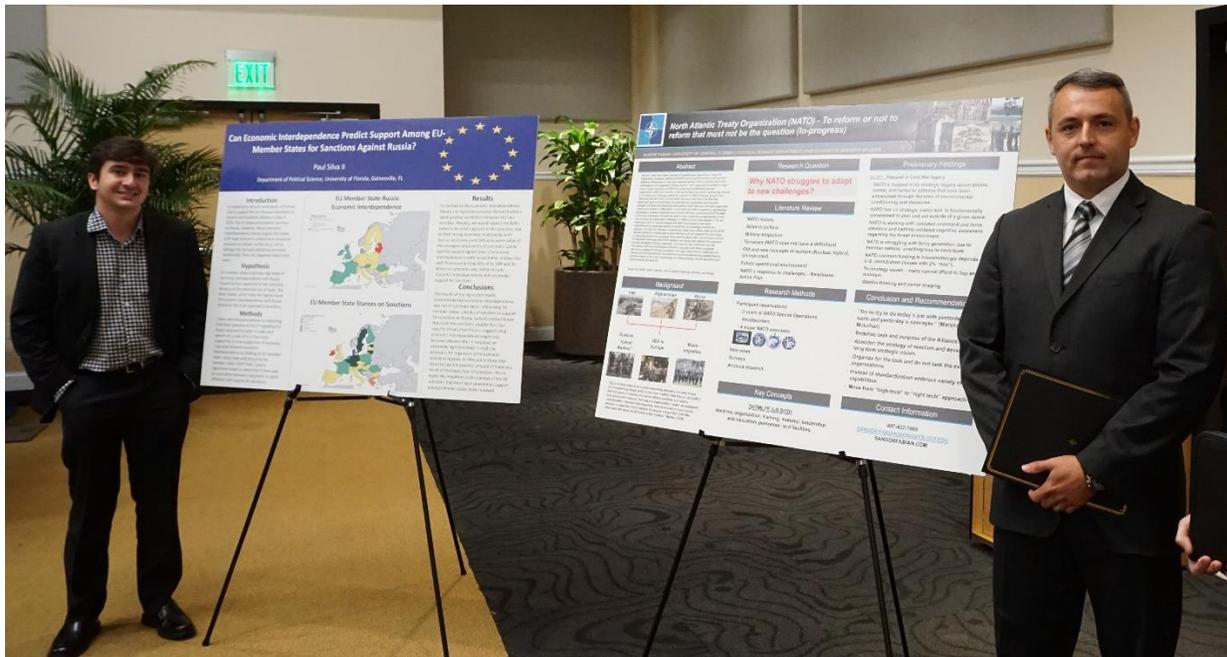
Jennifer Clinton, President and CEO of Cultural Vistas, spoke about the human connection in transatlantic security. She commented on the timeliness of the day's discussions, noting the World Economic Forum in Switzerland that had recently occurred and highlighted a rise in anti-American sentiment. Instead of focusing on leaders, though, Clinton proposed educational and occupational exchanges as a valuable form of citizen diplomacy. She explained the history of Cultural Vistas, which started as an initiative after World War II to diplomatically connect the U.S. and Europe. The program now facilitates educational exchange, but Clinton addressed the decline in this trend as a result of growing anti-American sentiment and increased costs of U.S. higher education. She ended with a call to action for everyone there to engage with local exchange organizations for richer, broader access to the rest of the world.



*On the value of student exchange, Clinton asked the beneficiary of an exchange program to describe her experience.*

Bersia returned to the stage to announce and interview the winners of the first-ever FNGS student research poster competition. The undergraduate winner was Paul Silva II, a student of political science at the University of Florida. He researched European economic interdependence as a potential predictor of countries' political support of Russia. The graduate winner was Sandor Fabian, a student in the security

studies doctoral program at UCF. His research, still ongoing, addresses NATO adaptiveness and potential reforms. Both students received an award, and their posters were on display at the event.



Ted Reynolds, Visiting Lecturer on Intelligence and Terrorism at UCF, introduced the next guest speaker, Luis C.deBaca, former U.S. Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. He spoke about human security and transatlantic relations, specifically about the scourge of human trafficking. He said countries need to stop treating the violation as an immigration issue and start addressing it as a civil rights issue – he commented that the European Union (EU) is the leader in this shift of treatment. He spoke about the swell of immigration and subsequent anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe, but noted the EU’s formal channels for any victim of human trafficking. He wanted both sides of the Atlantic to keep striving for a victim-centered approach to prevention, protection and prosecution.



Mark Schlakman, Senior Program Director for Florida State University’s Center for the Advancement of Human Rights, introduced the luncheon keynote presenter. Lieutenant General (ret.) Mark Hertling, former Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe, spoke about military security and transatlantic

relations. Serving in various posts throughout Europe in his career, he underscored the importance of learning about a host-country's culture to make deeper connections with each unit he worked with. He drew attention to the current state of the European Military Alliance, and how the decline in U.S. involvement has sent a negative message of less commitment to the region. European nations still experience internal conflict, he explained, and he pointed to areas on a map where threats such as terrorism, Russian expansionism, border security and human trafficking exist. Stability in transatlantic relations, he said, is bolstered by a reassuring U.S. commitment to the relationship when necessary.



Kerstin Hamann, Pegasus Professor and Chair of the Political Science Department at UCF, introduced the next presenter. James Bacchus, Distinguished University Professor of Global Affairs and Director of the Center for Global Economic and Environmental Opportunity at UCF, addressed economic security and transatlantic relations. He asked the audience what they thought the term “economic security” meant. After offering several potential ways to measure economic relations, he explained that security is less about one specific measure of growth, and more about sustainable practices across all sectors of the economy. He ventured that global inter-connectedness contradicts practices of only focusing inward. He cautioned that blaming foreigners for lost jobs is less difficult than adapting to new technologies. He listed the important ways to economically develop is through education, universal health and the preparation for future jobs instead of past ones. He ended by emphasizing how the economy and environment are connected as one, and we must strive for future development to acknowledge that reality.



Tim Robinson, Director of International Affairs at the University of North Florida, introduced the last presenter. Harriet L. Elam-Thomas, former U.S. Ambassador to Senegal and Diplomacy Program Director at UCF, closed the event with remarks on the intersections between all the day's speakers. She applauded the theme of transatlantic security, highlighting how Europe is the vital connection throughout the entire world. She noted that transatlantic security would not be possible without a firm understanding of human, military or economic relations, as they are all interconnected. Elam-Thomas concluded the summit with the statement of, "What effects one directly effects all indirectly."



The Florida International Summit is the signature, annual event of the Florida Network for Global Studies (FNGS), an educational consortium consisting of six Florida universities – FIU, FSU, UCF, UF, UNF and USF. Schools alternate hosting the summit, and this year, with FNGS support, the summit was hosted by UCF, through the Global Perspectives Office. To learn more about the 2018 or view the program booklet, visit [www.ucfglobalperspectives.org](http://www.ucfglobalperspectives.org).



*Students from Dr. Phillips High School's Center for International Studies Magnet Program*