

# AMERICAN SWISS FOUNDATION HONORS LAURENT FREIXE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF NESTLÉ S.A., AT 80TH ANNUAL GALA IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Thursday, May 8th, the American Swiss Foundation hosted its 80th Annual Gala at the Harvard Club in New York City. The event honored Laurent Freixe, Chief Executive Officer of Nestlé S.A., for his outstanding contributions in strengthening the bilateral relationship between Switzerland and the United States. Over 300 guests attended in recognition of Mr. Freixe's leadership and to celebrate the Sister Republics.

In his introductory remarks, Robert J. Giuffra, Jr., Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Swiss Foundation, underscored the continued importance of nurturing the bilateral relationship:

"For eighty years, the American Swiss Foundation has been committed to strengthening the deep and enduring bond between our two countries. Laurent Freixe exemplifies the kind of principled leadership that continues to bring our nations closer together."

Opening remarks were given by Oliver Buchhofer, Chief Operating Officer of Swiss International Air Lines and Young Leader 2024. Mr. Buchhofer noted:



ASF Celebrates 80 Years at Annual Gala



ASF Chair Robert J. Giuffra, Jr. in conversation with Laurent Freixe, Chief Executive Officer, Nestlé S.A.

“As a Young Leader, I’ve experienced firsthand how this Foundation builds lasting ties across borders. Tonight’s celebration is a powerful reminder of the strength of the Swiss-American relationship—and of the role each of us plays in advancing it.”

Laurent Freixe, Chief Executive Officer of Nestlé S.A., shared:

“I am deeply honored by this recognition. The partnership between Switzerland and the United States has long been a cornerstone of Nestlé’s global success. Tonight’s gathering is a testament to the shared values that unite our countries and to the power of investing in future leaders.”



Steven G. Hoch, His Excellency Dr. Ralf Heckner, Laurent Freixe, and Robert J. Giuffra, Jr.

The Ambassador Faith Whittlesey Leadership Award was presented to Steven G. Hoch, Chair Emeritus of the American Swiss Foundation and Partner at Brown Advisory, Young Leader 1990. Mr. Hoch was recognized for more than three decades of service to the Foundation and his pivotal role in its transformation and renewal in 2023.

“It has been a privilege to be part of the American Swiss Foundation’s journey for over three decades,” said Mr. Hoch. “From the earliest conversations with Ambassador Whittlesey about launching the Young Leaders Conference to the Foundation’s renewal in recent years, I have witnessed the enduring strength of our transatlantic community—and the power of servant leadership to sustain it.”

His Excellency Dr. Ralf Heckner, Ambassador of Switzerland to the United States and Young Leader 2001, delivered the evening’s closing remarks:

“The friendship between Switzerland and the United States is built not only on common interests, but on common ideals. As a Young Leader myself, I am proud to see the next generation carry this legacy forward—rooted in trust, cooperation, and mutual respect.”

The event was attended by distinguished members of both the Swiss and American communities, including business leaders, elected officials, and members of the diplomatic corps. Over 50 alumni of the Young Leaders Conference attended the Gala. Also present for this festive occasion were twenty directors of the Foundation, members of the U.S. Advisory Council, and members of the Swiss Advisory Council.

About the American Swiss Foundation

Founded in 1945 in response to World War II, the American Swiss Foundation's mission is to connect and engage Swiss and American leaders. Toward the end of the 20th century, two former U.S. Ambassadors to Switzerland—Shelby Cullom Davis and Faith Whittlesey—ushered in a new era for the organization, transforming it from a primarily social association to one focused on nurturing and investing in the next generation of leaders.

In 1975, Ambassador Davis assumed an active leadership role with the Foundation. He served as chairman and president until 1989, and as honorary chairman until his passing in 1994. In 1989, Ambassador Whittlesey became chairman and president of the Foundation and launched its flagship program, the Young Leaders Conference.

For more information, visit [www.americanswiss.org](http://www.americanswiss.org).

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