

SWISS WITH US



NEWS & VIEWS



From the Embassy of Switzerland in the U.S.

December 2023

Dear Friends of Switzerland,

As the winter chill sets in, I find great joy in looking back on the shared journey we've embarked upon at the Embassy of Switzerland over this past year. In the face of global challenges, our collective commitment to fostering diplomatic ties and advancing bilateral cooperation between Switzerland and the United States has been a source of profound inspiration.



Jacques Pitteloud is the Ambassador of Switzerland to the United States of America.

As I am about to begin my final year as Swiss ambassador to the United States, I reflect fondly on the remarkable year that 2023 has been for us! A particular source of pride is the launch of **SWISS IMPACT**. I highly encourage you to explore our website, where you can discover the many facets of Switzerland's positive impact in the United States in the fields of sustainability, innovation, economic relations, international partnership, and culture. Allow me the pleasure of recounting some of the SWISS IMPACT highlights that have shaped 2023 here at the Embassy.



SWISS IMM



The beginning of 2023 brought excellent news for our economic relations with the United States. In January, we achieved a significant milestone by signing the Mutual Recognition Agreement on Good Manufacturing Practices for Pharmaceuticals (MRA GMP), which came into effect [this past July](#). This agreement not only strengthens the alliance between our nations in the pharmaceutical sector, but also solidifies our roles as key hubs in the life sciences industry. Additionally, in a groundbreaking development for the Swiss quantum ecosystem, [IonQ](#), a leading quantum computer manufacturer based in the United States, has partnered with QuantumBasel to establish a European quantum data center in Switzerland. This collaboration signifies a major step in the closer connections between the Swiss and U.S. quantum ecosystems and aligns with our commitment to fostering international collaborations in cutting-edge technologies.



Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Helene Budliger Artieda, and Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, Jayme White, signing the GMP agreement on January 12, 2023.

[Click here for more details](#)



In February, we celebrated [Black History Month](#) for the fourth time with a series of dedicated events. Through a number of thought-provoking events, we explored civic community movements and social justice reforms relevant to African American life. These occasions not only emphasized the importance of African Americans in American history, politics, and culture, but also deepened my appreciation for the crucial role of cultural institutions in fostering understanding.



Celebrating Black History Month 2023 at the Swiss Residence with Mr. Douglas Emhoff, the Second Gentleman of the United States, Bryan Stevenson, Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, Madame Angélique Gakoko Pitteloud, and Ambassador Jacques Pitteloud.



After a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic, May marked the revival of the *Jungbürgerfeier*, a celebration of Swiss citizens attaining 18 years of age. I was pleased to meet and welcome 75 young adults for an informative session about their rights and obligations as Swiss citizens. They were also introduced to our strong education system in Switzerland, [the Swiss military service](#), as well as the Embassy's activities in the fields of culture and public diplomacy. The subsequent lively brunch at my Residence allowed these young minds to mingle and connect, fostering meaningful connections within the new generation.



The 2023 group of young Swiss citizens at the Residence following the informative session.



In June, we witnessed a significant advancement in the international partnership between Switzerland and the United States as our nations engaged in a second [bilateral dialogue on cybersecurity and digital matters](#). This constructive dialogue provided the perfect setting to address and advance bilateral cooperation on a wide range of issues, ranging from the application of international law in cyberspace to Switzerland's role as a host state for international organizations working on digital and cyber issues. For those eager to delve deeper into the topic of digitalization, I encourage you to take a look at Switzerland's [Digital Foreign Policy Strategy](#).



U.S. and Swiss officials took part in the 2023 Swiss-U.S. Cyber and Digital Dialogue, including staff from the Embassy of Switzerland.



Amidst the crisp October air, we were honored to host Ambassador [Franz Perrez](#), head of the Directorate of International Law and legal advisor to the Swiss Confederation. His visit sparked insightful discussions on UN Security Council sanctions, international humanitarian law, and the International Court of Justice's [Advisory Opinion on Climate Change](#). During his time, he also met with Richard C. Visek, acting U.S. Legal Advisor, addressing the crucial topic of accountability for international crimes in Ukraine and the preservation of international humanitarian law. These exchanges highlighted the significance of accountability and global cooperation.



Ambassador Franz Perrez with staff from the Embassy at the U.S. State Department.

SWISS IMPACT notable visitors for 2023

Throughout the year, our Embassy was dedicated to hosting distinguished guests, including two of our federal councilors: [Ignazio Cassis](#) and [Karin Keller-Sutter](#). [Helene Budliger Artieda](#), our Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs, visited to sign the GMP Agreement. We also had the honor of welcoming Swiss parliamentarians from the Parliamentary Association Switzerland – USA in March when we launched our [FDI brochure](#) about Switzerland's economic impact in the United States. Our guests further extended to notable figures including science communicator and media personality [Bill Nye the Science Guy](#), lawyer and social justice activist [Bryan Stevenson](#), Librarian of Congress [Carla Hayden](#), Nobel Prize-winning Swiss astronomer [Didier Queloz](#), Swiss artist [Ugo Rondinone](#), Swiss storytellers [Luca Crivelli](#) and [Tom Alemanno](#), and notable representatives of the Swiss Armed Forces, including [Chief of the Armed Forces Lieutenant General Thomas Süssli](#), Major General Peter Merz, and Lieutenant General Hans-Peter Walser.



As I traveled across the United States, my encounters with Swiss professors and scientists also left lasting impressions. We have an impressive and dense network of Swiss academics established in the U.S. who are making a daily impact within universities and research centers. Recognizing the need for a holistic overview, the Embassy worked closely with its Consulates, honorary consuls, and Swissnex offices to create its very own [Swiss Impact in Academia](#) map, featuring more than 280 contacts from New York to Hawaii! It's heartening to witness the rich tapestry of Swiss contributions flourishing across a variety of innovative fields, and our September celebration at the Embassy with these remarkable individuals was a great testament to the connections forged.

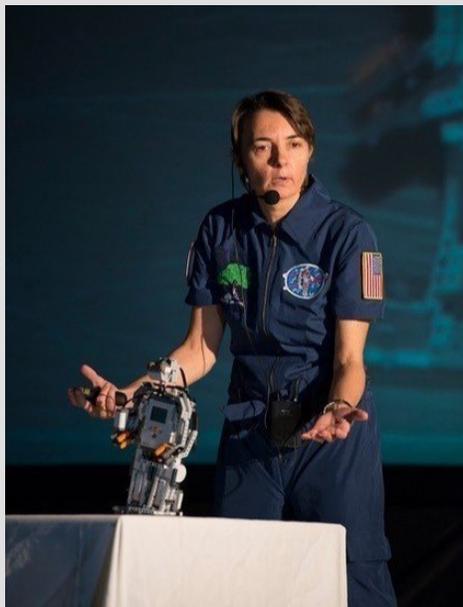


Opening speech by Severin Hacker, co-founder and CTO of Duolingo, during the evening reception in September.

Spotlighting Swiss scientists: focus on Dr. Monique Chyba

This year, the Embassy started spotlighting the impressive contributions of Swiss scientists and academics in the United States. We've been sharing their stories on social media, offering a glimpse into their impactful work. On International Women in Mathematics Day (May 12), we celebrated Dr. Monique Chyba from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, showcasing her achievements on both [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#) (formerly known as Twitter).

Do you know of other Swiss scientists excelling in the U.S.? [Reach out](#) to us and let us know – we'd love to feature their inspiring stories too!





On a lighter note, I engaged in a playful back-and-forth with Urban Ahlin, the Ambassador of Sweden in the United States. In our “[Switzerland \(not Sweden\)](#)” video, I responded to the Swedish efforts to once and for all end the confusion between our two countries – and I also loved the [responses from our colleagues at the Consulate General in New York and the Swedish Foreign Ministry!](#) Who knows, maybe a career as a YouTube influencer awaits when I leave Washington next year.

We love staying connected with you, and invite you to do the same through [SwissInTouch](#), where all of the important topics for the Swiss community are condensed into one app. Explore our [SWISS IMPACT](#) website, [subscribe to our events newsletter](#), and follow us on our [social media](#) channels to keep the journey going!



Swiss Ambassador Jacques Pitteloud ending the confusion between Switzerland and Sweden's impact in the U.S.

As we draw a curtain on this year, I want to extend my heartfelt wishes for joyous holidays to all of you. May the festive season bring warmth, unity, and a renewed spirit of joy.

With sincere gratitude and warm regards,
Jacques Pitteloud



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