

## **CWIT banquet features international trade expert**

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A banquet for the Charleston Women in International Trade calls for a keynote speaker who spends his days advancing free commerce around the world.

That's why Lt. Gen. Daniel Christman, who will present "Global Economy: The Need for American Leadership," at the April 12 event, was a perfect choice.

"He's an expert on China and that part of the world. That's a country to focus on" says Jacky Sassard, publicity chairwoman and vice secretary of CWIT, a nonprofit professional organization that offers networking and educational opportunities to promote women working in international trade.

Christman's knowledge of Southeast Asia is the result of a military career that included combat in that area during the Vietnam War.

His military service, however, is only one part of a lengthy resume.

Christman is currently the senior vice president for international affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

In that position, he represents the chamber to government and business leaders around the world and oversees policy analysis and programs aimed at improving free trade.

"Day to day, what I do is ensure there's a level playing field for U.S. companies overseas," Christman said.

A graduate of West Point and The George Washington University Law School, Christman also received degrees in public affairs and civil engineering from Princeton University.

He retired from the military in 2001 and went on to serve as a West Point superintendent and assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, traveling and advising then Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Christman was a U.S. representative to NATO's Military Committee in Brussels, Belgium, and was also president and executive director of the Kimsey Foundation, where he worked to develop a political reform program for China.

During the program he'll discuss a variety of issues ranging from border patrol to the economic effects of last year's devastating tsunami.

"What I'd like to address is international engagement and to explain the challenges and opportunities presented in India, China, Central America and the Dominican Republic," Christman says.

Those opportunities include the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement, or DR-

CAFTA.

DR-CAFTA, Christman explains, will remove tariffs on U.S exports in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

“It will open up the third largest market in the world,” he adds.

As the U.S. aids in the reconstruction of areas impacted by December’s tsunami, trade opportunities will be created, Christman says.

Though he will concentrate on global trade issues, Christman will also discuss homeland security and the need for a balance of safety and hospitality to members of the international business community. Specifically, visa controls must be stringent but not to the point where they serve as a deterrent for business people looking to convene in the U.S.

“Our borders need to be open for trade,” Christman says.

CWIT, an organization of nearly 60 members, is optimistic that Christman’s knowledge of world trade will draw a large crowd to its third annual banquet.

The group’s first event was attended by 60 people but by the second year that number more than doubled to 160.

“We’ve only been in existence since 2001 but we’ve had great growth,” says Pam Everitt, vice chairwoman and banquet chairwoman.

Christman will be joined by fellow speaker Leslie Schweitzer, who is a senior trade adviser for the National Chamber Foundation at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and has more than 30 years experience in international trade.

The CWIT banquet will begin at 6:30 p.m. and costs \$75 per person. For more information, visit [www.cwitsc.org](http://www.cwitsc.org).