

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor

International perspective in speaker series

US Consul General in Western Australia Rachel Cooke will draw on decades of international experience as the first guest in the 2018 program of the Great Southern Speaker Series.

Ms Cooke was appointed US Consul General in Perth in August 2016, having previously served as Deputy Director of the Department of State, overseeing bilateral policy between the US and six southeast Asian nations.

She spent five years working on Afghanistan issues, focusing primarily on education development and media engagement, and leading joint civilian-military training. Ms Cooke has also served in Malaysia, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, where she was acting public affairs officer during both the 2005 and 2010 revolutions.

The Great Southern Speaker Series is a partnership between the City of Albany, UWA Albany Centre, South Coast Natural Resource Management and the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC).

Ms Cooke will speak 'in conversation' with the ABC's Christine Layton at 6.30pm on Thursday 8 March in the Kalyenup Studio at the Albany Entertainment Centre. The event marks International Women's Day.

Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased from the Albany Entertainment Centre website.

GSDC Chair Ross Thornton said the series brought speakers with a range of experience and perspectives into the region.

"Guests in the Great Southern Speaker Series inform and inspire their audiences," Mr Thornton said.

"I encourage everyone with an interest in ideas and wider perspectives to come along and be part of the event."

Last year's speakers were Richard Goyder AO, Managing Director of Wesfarmers and Chairman of the AFL, and Nobel Laureate Professor Barry Marshall.

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