



News Release



MERAGE FOUNDATION
FOR THE
AMERICAN DREAM

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National Leadership Awards Dinner Celebrates Contributions of Immigrants to the United States

Over 400 political, government, business, academic, and non-profit leaders will attend the fifth annual National Leadership Awards Dinner at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C on June 3rd at 6:30 p.m. The Dinner will celebrate the contributions immigrants--new Americans-- have made to this country. Sponsored by the Merage Foundation for the American Dream (www.meragefoundations.com/mfad.html) and in association with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the dinner will honor five outstanding leaders whose journey to America as immigrants and lifelong journey *in* America has enriched this nation and expanded the choices open to all. They are:

Zbigniew Brzezinski: National Leadership Award for Public Service

Born in Poland, Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski was the first director of the Trilateral Commission strengthening relations between the U.S., Western Europe, and Japan. He was the principal foreign affairs advisor to President Carter. From 1977 to 1981, he was the U.S. National Security Advisor and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom "for his role in the normalization of US-Chinese relations." Dr. Brzezinski has distinguished himself as a professor at Harvard University, Columbia University and, currently, Johns Hopkins University as a Professor of American Foreign Policy.

Edwidge Danticat: National Leadership Award for Arts & Culture

In March 2008, Edwidge Danticat was announced the winner of the 2007 National Book Critic Circle Award for her most recent book, *Brother, I'm Dying*, a memoir. She was born in Haiti and moved to the United States when she was twelve. She is the author of several books, including *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, an Oprah Book Club Selection, *Krik? Krak!*, a National Book Award finalist, and *The Farming of Bones*, and American Book Award winner.

Kati Marton: National Leadership Award for Media

A best selling author of six books and now writing her seventh, Kati Marton fled Post-Revolution Hungary in the late fifties with her parents and has combined a career as a reporter and writer with human rights advocacy. She has just completed 5 years as Chair of the non-profit International Women's Health Coalition. She also serves on the board of directors of the International Rescue Committee, Human Rights Watch, and the New America Foundation. She

is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, P.E.N. International, and the Author's Guild. She has contributed as a reporter to multiple news sources including PBS, ABC, NPR, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Newsweek* and received a George Foster Peabody Award.

Hamid Moghadam: National Leadership Award for Business

Hamid Moghadam is Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of AMB Property Corporation, a leading global developer and owner of industrial real estate, a company he co-founded in 1983. He is a Trustee of Stanford University, serves as a Chairman of Stanford Management Company, and sits on the Stanford Graduate School of Business Advisory Council and its Campaign Steering Committee. As an immigrant from Iran, he is a recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, as well as the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award.

Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa: National Leadership Award for Science & Technology

Originally emigrating from Mexico to California as an undocumented migrant farm worker, Dr. Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa received his BA from UC Berkeley and his MD from Harvard where he graduated cum laude and became a citizen. Now an Associate Professor of Neurosurgery, Oncology, Neuroscience, and Cellular and Molecular Medicine, Dr. Quiñones serves as the Director of the brain tumor program at Johns Hopkins. Dr. Quiñones conducts numerous research efforts on the role of stem cells in the origin of brain tumors and the potential role stem cells can have in fighting brain cancer and subsequently regaining neurological function. He has been named one of *Popular Science* magazine's "Brilliant 10 Scientists" and one of *Hispanic Business* journal's "Top 100 Most Influential Hispanics in the U.S."

Previous National Leadership Award winners include: Ambassador Francis Deng, former Ambassador and U.N. Advisor; Jack Rosenthal, President of the New York Times Company Foundation; Shirley Tilghman, President of Princeton University; Jerry Yang, Co-Founder of Yahoo!, Inc.; Vartan Gregorian, President of Carnegie Corporation; Jenny Ming, former President of Old Navy; Cesar Pelli of Pelli Clark Pelli Architects; Madeleine Albright, former Secretary of State; Mario Molina, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry; Max Frankel, former Editor of *The New York Times*; and Armando Codina of the Codina Group.

The Merage Foundation's American Dream Fellows are graduating seniors who immigrated to this nation and were nominated as outstanding leaders and students from the Foundation's 22 partner universities. Twelve new 2008 Fellows will be introduced during the Dinner and will each receive a \$20,000 stipend to begin pursuit of their American Dream.

Paul Merage, founder and president of the Merage Foundation for the American Dream, noted that he and his wife Lilly "are grateful for the response to the Awards Dinner from leaders all over the nation." He noted that "hopefully the Dinner will help all Americans understand the positive impact new Americans have had on this nation." Paul Merage also said that "the Foundation is pleased to honor the nominees. Each has become a worthy legend in their own time. Each has made America and the world a better place." Mr. Merage commented that he and his wife Lilly are also proud to announce the new class of Merage Fellows. "They were carefully selected from among graduating immigrant seniors for their academic and leadership excellence. We are pleased that the Merage Foundation for the American Dream will be able to give them a jump start in the pursuit of their American Dream."

Former Congressman Lee Hamilton, president and director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, said that "The National Leadership Awards Dinner and its outstanding honorees reflect the importance of immigration to America and the fact that America, in welcoming immigrants to its shores, has benefited immensely. My colleagues and I at the Center

have welcomed the opportunity to work with the Merage Foundation for the American Dream in sponsoring the National Leadership Awards Dinner.”

For further information about the National Leadership Awards Dinner, please call or e-mail Marshall Kaplan, Executive Director of the Merage Foundation for the American Dream, tel. 949-474-5882; Mkaplan@MerageFoundations.com; for more information about the Merage Foundation for the American Dream, see the Foundation’s website at www.meragefoundations.com/mfad.html.