

Washington, D.C., Gathering Celebrates Knowledge as the Foundation for a Democratic Society

Nearly one thousand of the foremost scientists, humanists, and leaders in business and public affairs gathered in Washington, D.C., from April 27–29 for the first joint meeting of the nation’s two oldest learned societies – the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society. Both organizations predate the birth of the nation and include among their founding members Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, James Bowdoin, and John Hancock. Members of the congressionally chartered National Academies (the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the Institute of Medicine) joined the Academy and the Philosophical Society for the historic two-and-a-half-day meeting.

The Public Good: Knowledge as the Foundation for a Democratic Society was organized by Academy Chief Executive Officer Leslie Berlowitz and Philosophical Society Co-Executive Officer Mary Maples Dunn. It brought together academics and practitioners for a series of panel discussions, conversations, and dinner programs that focused on some of the most pressing issues facing the nation: *The Independence of the Courts; Religion and the Enlightenment; The United States and the Global Economy; The Media and Society; Science, Health, and*



Front: Mary Maples Dunn (American Philosophical Society) and Leslie Berlowitz (American Academy of Arts and Sciences); Back: William Friend (National Academy of Engineering), Ralph Cicerone (National Academy of Sciences), Emilio Bizzi (American Academy of Arts and Sciences), Baruch Blumberg (American Philosophical Society), and Harvey Fineberg (Institute of Medicine)

an Aging Society; and Energy Choices and Global Warming.

The more than forty featured presenters at the meeting included Pedro Aspe (Evercore Partners); Tom Brokaw (NBC News); Ralph Cicerone (National Academy of Sciences); E. L. Doctorow (NYU); Harvey Fineberg (Institute of Medicine); Linda Greenhouse (*New York Times*); Charles Holliday, Jr. (DuPont); Gwen Ifill (*Washington Week* and *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*); Kathleen Hall Jamieson (University of Pennsylvania); Judith Kaye (New York State Court of Appeals); Edward Lazear (President’s Council of Economic Advisors); Martin Marty (University of Chicago); Richard Meserve (Carnegie Institution of Washington); Peter Nicholas (Boston Scientific Corporation); Don Michael Randel (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation); John Reed (Citigroup, Inc.); John Rowe (Columbia University); Robert Solow (MIT); Rosanna Warren (Boston University); and Janet Yellen (Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco).

At a ceremony at the Library of Congress on April 28, the Academy and the Philosophical Society paid tribute to three distinguished Americans. Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, historian and scholar John Hope Franklin, and former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor received *Public Good Awards* in recognition of their dedicated public service and their significant contributions to the advancement of learning.

The Academy will publish the panel discussions, keynote addresses, and *Public Good Award* citations in a forthcoming publication. The audio of the program is available for downloading from the Academy’s website at <http://www.amacad.org/audio/publicgood>.

The Academy and the Philosophical Society express their deep appreciation to Ambassador Leonore Annenberg, a member of both societies, and to the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands for generously supporting this joint meeting. ■



Don Michael Randel (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation)