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NEWS ADVISORY

The Honorable Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education, will receive the World Affairs Council – Washington, DC (WAC-DC) *International Affairs Award* at its 30th Anniversary Global Education Gala at The Ritz-Carlton – Washington DC on March 10 and give a Keynote Address on ‘The US Global Education Challenge in an Inter-Connected World.’

Other honorees include **His Excellency Pierre Vimont**, Ambassador of the Republic of France to the United States, receiving the *Distinguished Diplomatic Service Award*, who will provide an overview of French–US Education priorities & programs; **Dr. Steven Knapp**, President, The George Washington University, who will receive the *Educator of the Year Award* and outline GW’s commitment to Global Education & International Affairs; **Google Inc’s** acceptance of the *Global Education Award* by **Dr. Vinton G. Cerf**, Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist, who will comment on the challenges of global internet freedom; & **Judy Woodruff**, Senior Correspondent, *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, PBS, who will emcee the event and receive the *Global Communications Award* & give remarks on broadcast journalism in the age of new media.

The World Affairs Council – Washington, DC, ‘A Leading Forum for Global Education & International Affairs’ and an institution ‘Where Learning Happens.’ will host its annual Global Education Gala at the **Ritz-Carlton Hotel** at 1150 22nd Street, NW, in Washington, DC. The dinner highlights the Council’s regional, national, and global outreach programs that involve students, teachers, community leaders, American citizens, and international community representatives in programs that expand their understanding of global education and international affairs issues that impact the United States and its relationships with the the world.

The dinner will involve 350 guests; including 40 ambassadors from the Washington diplomatic corps, former WAC -DC honorees, White House, Cabinet, Congressional, business, civic, labor, trade & professional association & press and media representatives.

The WAC–DC board of directors is composed of distinguished corporate, former governmental, diplomatic and NGO representatives, educators, and civic leaders committed to implementing the council’s global education and international affairs priorities.

The Hon. Frank Kramer, Chairman, WAC-DC, said “The World Affairs Council – Washington, DC and our Board of Directors, are delighted to bring together leaders from the public, private, and voluntary sectors to recognize the efforts of the WAC – DC’s 2010 honorees in the areas of global education and international affairs. The work of these outstanding individuals and organizations is intertwined with the mission of our Council and their exemplary commitment to ‘help address the global education & international affairs challenges of our nation and the world.’ We are proud to bestow upon each of them our most prominent awards”.

The Hon. Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, stated “As Secretary of Education, I am committed to ensure that all Americans have an equal opportunity to receive a world class education so they are prepared to succeed in the global economy. President Obama and I want to work in partnership with other countries so we learn from each other and improve schools for children throughout the world. I am honored to accept your *International Affairs Award* and am grateful for the dedication of the employees at the US Department of Education as we work to improve the quality of education for all children everywhere.”

Dr. Steven Knapp, President, The George Washington University, commented, “The George Washington University and the World Affairs Council – Washington, DC share a deep commitment to global education. On behalf of our entire university, I am honored to accept the *Educator of the Year Award* from an institution that does so much to promote global awareness among the youth, the teachers, and the wider public in Washington, DC and across the capital region.”

His Excellency Pierre Vimont, Ambassador of the Republic of France to the United States, stated “A national commitment to global education and international affairs is a shared priority for France and the United States; and of increasing importance worldwide, in this new age of instantaneous global communications. The World Affairs Council continues to excel in its vital work in this critical area and the government of France strongly supports its mission and expansion of bi-lateral French – American education, cultural and communications programs. I am deeply honored on behalf of France and all who serve in our embassy & consulates in the United States of America to receive the *Distinguished Diplomatic Service Award*.”

Dr. Vinton G. Cerf added “The World Affairs Council recognizes and supports the importance of the Internet and the free flow of information, as well as the challenges of cyberspace security, through its public forums, issue advocacy and extensive use of new electronic and digital media. The Council actively uses the Internet to promote its knowledge transfer, policy research and education mission goals through blogs, lecture videos, social networking sites, video-streaming, podcasts and other online applications. As someone who recognizes and applauds the WAC-DC priorities, I am pleased to accept the *Global Education Award* from the World Affairs Council on behalf of the Founders and innovative employees of Google.”

Judy Woodruff, Senior Correspondent, The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, said “In our increasingly turbulent and interconnected world it is important for Americans to stay current on global issues. The World Affairs Council – Washington, DC is an excellent neutral platform for world figures and thought leaders to inform and engage citizens by providing access for dialog with people at the front lines of international decisions, and policy making. Thank you for your recognition of the importance of journalism with this much appreciated *Global Communications Award*.”

1. **The Honorable Franklin Kramer** is an independent consultant and was Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs for President Bill Clinton and Secretaries William Cohen and William Perry. Mr. Kramer is chairman of the board of the World Affairs Council - Washington, DC; vice chairman of the Atlantic Council, and chairman of its Committee on Asian and Global Security; a Capstone Professor at the George Washington University Elliott School of International Affairs; and on the board of directors and board of advisers of other prestigious American and international organizations.
2. **The Honorable Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education** had a fast-paced career in Chicago's public school system. As a young student in the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, Secretary Duncan aspired to play or coach professional basketball, and then, after graduating magna cum laude from Harvard University, he spent 1987-1991 playing professionally in Australia. Having studied sociology at Harvard, he returned to Chicago to lead the Ariel Education Initiative, which helped fund college educations for a group of inner-city students. In 1998 Duncan joined Chicago Public Schools, where within three years he would be appointed chief executive officer. During his tenure as CEO, CPS students increased ACT scores at three times the rate of national gains, and the number of high school students taking Advanced Placement courses tripled while the number of students passing AP classes more than doubled. The number of teachers achieving National Board Certification—the highest education credential available to teachers—increased from 11 in 1999 to 1,191 in 2008, making Chicago the fastest-growing urban district in this area of achievement. Duncan became the longest-serving big-city education superintendent in the country before being appointed U.S. Secretary of Education in the administration of President Barack Obama.
3. **Dr. Steven Knapp is President of The George Washington University in Washington, DC since August 2007.** Previously, he served as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at The Johns Hopkins University where he assigned a special priority to the university's role in the national and international community. He organized an Urban Health Council to develop an effective university and health system response to the public health problems in Baltimore's inner city. Dr. Knapp is a graduate of Yale University, and earned his masters and doctorates from Cornell University. He served for 16 years on the faculty of University of California, Berkeley as a specialist in 18th and 19th century English literature and in literary theory, before joining Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Knapp currently serves on the board of directors of the National Symphony Orchestra and the Greater Washington Urban League. He is a member of the executive committees of the Council on Competitiveness, Atlantic-10, and the Federal City Council.
4. **His Excellency Pierre Vimont was appointed Ambassador of the Republic of France to the United States in August 2007 by President Nicolas Sarkozy** and currently ranks as "first-class plenipotentiary minister" in the French civil service. Prior to his appointment, Ambassador Vimont was a Second Secretary at the French Embassy in London in 1977-1978, and First Secretary from 1978-1981. In 1990- 1993, His Excellency became chief of staff to the minister delegate of European affairs and from 1999- 2002, he was the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France and the European Union in Brussels. Ambassador Vimont is a graduate of the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris and Ecole Nationale, and has a license in law.
5. **Dr. Vinton Gray Cerf is Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist of Google and is often recognized as the "father of the internet".** He is responsible for identifying new enabling technologies and applications on the Internet and other platforms for the company. Dr. Cerf graduated from Stanford University and received his Masters and PhD in computer science from UCLA. He joined the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) in 1976, and had a key role in the development of the Internet and Internet-related data packet and security technologies. During his time with MCI as Vice President and Senior Vice President, he was instrumental in the development of the first commercial email system (MCI Mail). Dr. Cerf has received numerous awards for his work and connections with the Internet including the National Medal of Technology, the Turing Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.
6. **Judy Woodruff is a broadcast journalist, senior correspondent, and anchor of *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer on PBS*.** Originally from Tulsa, Oklahoma, she graduated from Duke University and began her career in Atlanta. She served as NBC's chief White House correspondent from 1977 to 1982 and covered Washington for the *Today Show* from 1982-83. In 1983 she moved to PBS and was the chief Washington correspondent for *The MacNeil/Lehrer News House* and from 1984-1990 also anchored PBS' award-winning weekly commentary *Frontline with Judy Woodruff*. She serves on the Board of trustees of the Freedom Forum, the Newseum, and the National Museum of American History.

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The World Affairs Council – Washington, DC, ‘A Leading Forum for Global Education and International Affairs,’ is an institution ‘Where Learning Happens.’

The World Affairs Council – Washington, DC (WAC–DC) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to expanding awareness among the American public and the international community of geopolitical, business, and civil society issues in our inter-connected world.

Since 1980, WAC–DC has been a **leading provider** of top-level and thought-provoking presentations, debates, and discussions of global education and international affairs in the Washington metro area. The council’s programs include public, diplomatic, political, and business events, town hall meetings, professional development seminars, and international communications programs.

The council provides a **neutral forum** for speeches by presidents, prime ministers, cabinet officials, economists, diplomats, scholars, academics, corporate leaders, authors, researchers, pundits, journalists, and Nobel laureates. These worldwide speakers join council members, VIP guests, online audiences and the public for in-depth discussions of major foreign policy and education issues that have global impact.

The council’s Ambassador, Embassy, Author, and Distinguished Speaker Series; Foreign Policy Fora; and Young Professional and News Maker programs engage over **5,000 members and guests each year**. Since 2000, more than 110 foreign ambassadors, 50 US ambassadors, 21 US cabinet secretaries, and two US presidents have shared their perspectives on international affairs with our audiences. In addition, since launching the council’s online programs in 2007, more than **200,000 people have viewed WAC–DC events** via the internet, video streaming, podcasts, and other new media distribution channels, in addition to C-Span and FORA.tv coverage.

To prepare young people to compete in the 21st century market, the council helps fill the global education and international affairs knowledge gap in the curricula currently offered by our country’s school systems. The council’s teacher development workshops, in-depth issue seminars, youth leadership forums, Academic World Quest competitions, internships, and international travel-study tours foster a balanced view of global issues. These programs **facilitate worldwide knowledge transfer and analytical insights** for American and international educators and their students.

Within the World Affairs Council of America’s 90-council nationwide network, WAC–DC is the recognized leader in **professional development programs for educators**. To date, over 1,000 American and international high school educators have participated in 20 annual Institutes on International Affairs, resulting in a direct impact on more than 500,000 students in the US and worldwide.

Since 2001, over 5,600 students from the national capital area have benefited from the council’s Youth Leadership Fora. Over the past ten years, the council’s Young Ambassador Scholarship program has created **international travel-study experiences** for nearly 60 deserving area high school students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. WAC–DC is aware of the need to bring this type of learning experience to the area school systems, and is actively engaged with an outreach program involving world history, geography, civics, social studies, and international affairs teachers and their students to help address this global education gap.

The council is governed by a board composed of international corporate executives, former high-ranking US government officials, senior development bank and NGO personnel, and academics. The board works with an experienced professional staff, interns, and dedicated volunteers to ensure that the council’s high-impact, targeted, and multi-disciplinary services are conducted according to **international best practices** and delivered with cost efficiency.

While the global education and international affairs results of the council’s programs are extensive, WAC–DC is expanding its American and international partnerships and services through a proactive **forward strategy for the 21st century**.