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## Nine Philanthropists Named Recipients of the 2017 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy

*New York, June 22, 2017*— The international family of Carnegie institutions named nine exceptional philanthropists as recipients of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy today in recognition of their outstanding and innovative leadership in philanthropy, celebrating Andrew Carnegie’s philanthropic ideals.

Their foresight and generosity have been effective in addressing a range of important issues, including social entrepreneurship, nuclear nonproliferation, career training, medical research, the arts, culture, school reform in India, women’s rights in China, and land conservation in South America.

The 2017 honorees are:

- **Mei Hing Chak** China; HeungKong Charitable Foundation
- **H. F. (Gerry) and Marguerite Lenfest** U.S.A.; Lenfest Foundation
- **Azim Premji** India; Azim Premji Foundation
- **Julian Robertson** U.S.A.; Robertson Foundation
- **Jeff Skoll** U.S.A.; Skoll Foundation
- **Kristine McDivitt Tompkins** U.S.A.; Tompkins Conservation
- **Shelby White** U.S.A.; Leon Levy Foundation
- **Sir James D. Wolfensohn** U.S.A. and Australia; Wolfensohn Center for Development

“The recipients of the 2017 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy were selected for their distinguished and longstanding contributions to the public good,” said Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation of New York. “The medal reflects Andrew Carnegie’s enduring legacy of philanthropy and is rooted in two core principles. First: with wealth comes responsibility. Second: individuals, whether guided by religious, civic, humanistic, or democratic aspirations, have the transformative power to use wealth to advance the public good.”

“Just as our founder demonstrated,” Gregorian continued, “the recipients inspire a culture of giving through their leadership, providing a model for the next generation of philanthropists.”

The Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy was established in 2001 and is awarded every two years to individuals whose philanthropic work embodies the ideals of Andrew Carnegie’s vision, serving as a continuous inspiration to others. Having amassed what was then the greatest fortune on earth, the legendary American industrialist decided to give it all away with the stated goal of doing “real and permanent good in this world.”

The 22 Carnegie institutions in the United States and Europe nominate the medalists, and a selection committee representing seven of those institutions makes the final selection. The honorees are recognized as catalysts for good whose philanthropy has had a significant and lasting impact on a particular field, nation, or community of people.

The Carnegie institutions will award the medals during a formal ceremony at The New York Public Library’s Stephen A. Schwarzman Building on October 3, 2017. Carnegie Corporation of New York will host the private event. Katty Kay, anchor of *BBC World News America*, will serve as master of ceremonies.

**The Medal Selection Committee includes:**

- **William Thomson CBE, Honorary Chair** Former Chair and Honorary President, Carnegie United Kingdom Trust
- **Vartan Gregorian, Chair** President, Carnegie Corporation of New York
- **Anthony S. Bryk** President, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
- **William J. Burns** President, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- **Nora Rundell** Chief Executive, Carnegie Dunfermline and Hero Fund Trusts
- **Matthew Scott** President, Carnegie Institution for Science
- **Andy Walker** Secretary and Treasurer, Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland

**Past recipients of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy:**

**2015** Paul G. Allen, Charles F. Feeney, Jeremy and Hanne Grantham, the Haas Family, Jon M. Huntsman, Sr., Irwin and Joan Jacobs, brothers Robert B. Menschel and Richard L. Menschel, and David M. Rubenstein.

**2013** Sir Tom Hunter, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, James and Marilyn Simons, the Wolfson Family, and Dmitry Zimin

**2011** The Crown Family, the Danforth Family, Stanley and Fiona Druckenmiller, Li Ka-shing, Fred Kavli, the Lauder Family (Leonard and Evelyn Lauder, Ronald and Jo Carole Lauder), Pierre and Pamela Omidyar, the Pew Family, and the Pritzker Family

**2009** Michael Bloomberg, the Koç Family, Gordon and Betty Moore, and Sanford and Joan Weill

**2007** Eli Broad, the Heinz Family, the Mellon Family, and the Tata Family

**2005** His Highness the Aga Khan, the Cadbury Family, Sir Tom Farmer, Agnes Gund, the Hewlett Family, and the Packard Family

**2003** Kazuo Inamori and the Sainsbury Family

**2001** Walter and Leonore Annenberg, Brooke Astor, Irene Diamond, the Gates Family, the Rockefeller Family, George Soros, and Ted Turner

## **2017 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy Recipients**

**Mei Hing Chak** China; HeungKong Charitable Foundation

In 2005 Mei Hing Chak (also known as Meiqing Zhai) established the HeungKong Charitable Foundation, a leading nonpublic philanthropic foundation in China, committed to education, poverty alleviation, and rescue/disaster relief. The foundation has served more than two million people in need. Its efforts include sending books to over one million students, providing assistance to over 80,000 handicapped children and elderly people, and inspiring more than 100,000 people to volunteer for charitable causes. Ms. Chak is the president of HeungKong Group Limited, a large, privately run conglomerate with businesses spanning several industries, including commercial trade circulation, financial investment, health, resources and energy, education, property management, and industry and development. The HeungKong Group has around 20,000 employees and assets of approximately RMB100 billion.

**H. F. (Gerry) and Marguerite Lenfest** U.S.A.; Lenfest Foundation

Gerry Lenfest practiced law with the New York firm of Davis Polk & Wardwell and Marguerite Lenfest taught elementary school in Manhattan and on Long Island. Mr. Lenfest moved from the law to publishing and, ultimately, to cable television and communications, a journey culminating in the creation of Lenfest Communications. Growing into the 12th largest cable television company in the nation, Lenfest Communications was sold to Comcast Corporation in 2000. After the sale of their company, the Lenfests decided to devote their total wealth to philanthropic causes during their lifetimes. The Lenfests have continued to support the schools they attended as well as other philanthropic causes, primarily in the Philadelphia area.

#### **Azim Premji** India; Azim Premji Foundation

After transforming Wipro Limited into a leading international corporation, Azim Premji turned his attention toward the inequities in Indian society through efforts to improve the country's public school system. This extraordinary undertaking is driven by the Azim Premji Foundation's direct field work, currently serving seven states and over 300,000 schools and with plans to expand. A generous endowment from Mr. Premji enabled the foundation to establish the Azim Premji University in 2011, with a focus on school education and related fields of human development. Forty-six percent of the university's student body comes from villages and small towns, with a majority committing to work in the social sector after graduation. The foundation's university and field institutions work synergistically toward the goal of creating a more equitable and just India. Recently Mr. Premji set up a fast-scaling grantmaking initiative that supports nonprofits working in areas that complement education.

#### **Julian Robertson** U.S.A.; Robertson Foundation

Julian Robertson and his wife, Josie, founded the Robertson Foundation in 1996 to focus on high-impact grants in education, the environment, and medical research. Major initiatives include public education reform in New York City, leadership-based scholarship programs at Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, programs that combat climate change, and medical research at Memorial Sloan Kettering, Rockefeller University, and several stem cell institutes. Mr. Robertson enjoyed a lengthy career at Kidder Peabody prior to cofounding Tiger Management in 1980, building Tiger into one of the world's largest hedge funds and training a generation of "Tiger Cubs." Today Tiger Management seeds independent hedge funds.

#### **Jeff Skoll** U.S.A.; Skoll Foundation

Jeff Skoll is an entrepreneur whose commitment to peace, sustainability, and human welfare inspired a diverse portfolio of philanthropic and commercial enterprises over a 17-year span. This portfolio includes the Skoll Foundation, Participant Media, Skoll Global Threats Fund, and Capricorn Investment Group. Overseen and coordinated under the Jeff Skoll Group umbrella, these organizations are designed to challenge some of the greatest threats to mankind and the environment today. As the first full-time employee and former president of eBay, Mr. Skoll developed an expertise for combining entrepreneurship and technology to inspire pivotal change. He holds a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Toronto and an MBA from the Stanford Graduate School of Business. Mr. Skoll was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2012.

### **Kristine McDivitt Tompkins** U.S.A.; Tompkins Conservation

Kristine McDivitt Tompkins's philanthropic career dramatically increased in scale with her partnership and marriage to Douglas Tompkins in 1993. Their shared appreciation for nature, its unspoiled beauty and inhabitants, led to the creation of Tompkins Conservation, the umbrella organization covering a range of efforts to preserve, nurture, and restore biodiversity through conservation, restoration, regenerative agriculture, and activism. Although Mr. Tompkins died in 2015, the couple's shared mission continues to inspire conservation accomplishments of epic proportions. Steadfast in her commitment, Ms. Tompkins, together with her husband, acquired and donated millions of acres of unspoiled new parklands to Chile and Argentina. This achievement rendered the couple the most successful park-oriented conservationists in history. Ms. Tompkins is the former CEO of the outdoor clothing and gear company Patagonia, Inc.

### **Shelby White** U.S.A.; Leon Levy Foundation

Philanthropy was a critical component in the upbringing of both Shelby White and her late husband, Leon Levy. Throughout their marriage, the couple shared enthusiasm for matters ranging from human rights and civil liberties to neuroscience, economics, and the humanities. When her husband died in 2003, Ms. White established the Leon Levy Foundation to continue the philanthropic endeavors they had initiated. The foundation supports brain research, the study of ancient civilizations, historic preservation, and arts and culture. Ms. White serves on the boards of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Institute for Advanced Study, The New York Botanical Garden, New York University, Bard Graduate Center, and The Writers Room. Chairman of the American Friends of the Israel Antiquities Authority, she also supports the Shelby White and Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publications at Harvard University.

**Sir James D. Wolfensohn** U.S.A. and Australia; Wolfensohn Center for Development

Over the course of many years, Sir James D. Wolfensohn has supported a range of organizations committed to the humanities, the sciences, and arts and culture. Beneficiaries include landmark institutions such as Carnegie Hall, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Institute for Advanced Study. In addition to his philanthropy, Sir James has a distinguished record of public service, including spearheading programs to combat global poverty and corruption as president of the World Bank from 1995 to 2005. He is a retired chairman of the Citigroup International Advisory Board and is currently the chairman of Wolfensohn & Company, LLC.

To learn more about the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy (including current and past honorees), the Carnegie family of institutions, and Andrew Carnegie the man, please visit our website at [MedalofPhilanthropy.org](http://MedalofPhilanthropy.org), and follow us on Twitter @CarnegieMedal #CMoP.