

The 114th Annual Benjamin Franklin Awards Dinner Gala

Honoring those that promote trans-Atlantic economic relations



The Benjamin Franklin Awards Dinner Gala

The Benjamin Franklin Dinner, named after America's first diplomat, began in 1895 as an annual gala event. In 1928 AmCham started awarding a Medal of Honor at the dinners to those who had been particularly supportive of its mission to promote trans-Atlantic economic relations. Among the recipients have been French Presidents Paul Doumer and Albert Lebrun, Ambassadors Charles Bohlen, Pamela Harriman and Felix Rohatyn, and the CEOs of prominent companies such as American Express, General Electric, Axa, Eurodisney, IBM France, J.P. Morgan, France Telecom, Ford Motors, and United Technologies. The 2008 recipient was Minister of Economy and Finance Christine Lagarde.

This year's awards went to Maurice Lévy of Publicis Groupe and Frederick W. Smith of FedEx.

The French-American Business Council (FABC)

The French-American Business Council (FABC) was created in 1998 by U.S. Ambassador to France, Felix Rohatyn, and French Ambassador to the U.S., François Bujon de l'Estang. With a variable membership of about 100 of the largest French and U.S. firms, it is a high-level forum to exchange ideas on improving Franco-American economic relations. It enjoys the strong support of the French and American governments. The inaugural meeting, which was attended by President Clinton, took place in Washington D.C. in June 1998. Subsequent meetings were held in Paris (1999 and 2003), New York (2000), and Versailles (2001). The last meeting was held in Washington in November 2007 on the occasion of President Sarkozy's first official visit to the United States.



Above: Mr. Smith speaks.

Top right: (L-R) AmCham Managing Director Oliver Griffith, Maurice Lévy, Frederick Smith, AmCham President Jean-Claude Gruffat.

Bottom Right: President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Thomas Donohue