



THE MARSHALL LEGACY INSTITUTE

Removing Landmines, Promoting Stability

November 9, 2011 - Washington, DC - The Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI), a Virginia-based international humanitarian organization, hosted its 14th annual *Clearing the Path* Gala on October 4th in Washington, DC at the elegant Fairmont Hotel. Nearly 350 guests helped MLI honor leaders whose extraordinary efforts have improved lives in war-torn countries. With dozens of generous Gala sponsors, including Title Sponsor **General Dynamics**, the event raised more than \$300,000 to support MLI's humanitarian programs.

MLI works to restore hope and promote stability in war-torn countries by implementing sustainable and affordable programs that help countries remove the scourge of landmines. Since its founding in 1997, MLI has donated 171 mine detection dogs (MDDs) to eleven different countries around the world, to include Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Eritrea, Iraq, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and most recently, Angola. MLI's Children Against Mines Program (CHAMPS) is an educational outreach program that fosters global citizenship by encouraging American students to help others in mine-affected countries through service-learning projects. Finally, MLI's Survivors' Assistance program helps landmine survivors who are struggling to overcome the devastating physical and psychological scars of their injuries by providing prosthetic devices, rehabilitative treatment and vocational training.

MLI was delighted to have ABC news anchor Sam Donaldson and wife Jan Smith-Donaldson serve as Masters of Ceremonies for the Gala. They kicked off the evening and introduced Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns, who emphasized the importance of continuing the uphill battle to remove the grave threats that landmines pose to human life and security. "The Marshall Legacy Institute has become a premier example of how much we can accomplish when government and private organizations work together in common cause," said the Deputy Secretary. The Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement has been a supporter of MLI since 1999 and has been indispensable to MLI's programs.

After a delightful dinner and colorful performances of traditional Afghan and Azeri dances performed by the Nomad Dancers, the awards ceremony officially commenced. The first award presentation, the Joan Wismer CHAMPS Award, went to the Glenelg Country School (GCS) of Ellicott City, Maryland for their tireless enthusiasm for the CHAMPS Program. MLI founder and Board Chairman, General Gordon Sullivan, then took the stage to present the 2011 Public Policy Award to Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) in recognition of his endeavors to create a safer world for people and animals and his consistent advocacy for global diplomatic initiatives.

Following Senator Reed's remarks, Dr. Ken Rutherford, Director of the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery, and former recipient of MLI's Survivors' Assistance Award, presented the Fantomi Sitting Volleyball Team with the 2011 Survivors' Assistance Award. Mirsad Mirojević, co-founder and Director of the Fantomi Sitting Volleyball Team, and Marija Trlin of the Mine Dog Detection Center in Bosnia Herzegovina accepted the award on behalf of the team. The evening concluded with the presentation of the MDD Team of the Year Award, which went to *MDD Pete* and his handler Shah Mahmood, who have been working together in Afghanistan since 2008 to make the country a safer place. Although the team could not attend the Gala, Ambassador Eklil Hakimi of Afghanistan and MDD trainer Glenn Hayter accepted the award on their behalf. Ambassador Hakimi thanked MLI for the twenty eight MDDs that have been donated to his country over the past three years.



2011 Gala Award Recipients

MLI is so grateful to everyone who so generously contributed to the success of the *Clearing the Path* Gala, including the many sponsors, donors, volunteers, and members of the Gala Steering Committee. For more information or to take part in the 2012 *Clearing the Path* Gala, scheduled for October 10, 2012, please contact info@marshall-legacy.org or call 703-243-9200.

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