

# American Swiss Foundation Honors Dr. Vas Narasimhan; Presents Inaugural Ambassador Faith Whittlesey Leadership Award

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NEW YORK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, May 11, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On May 9th, the American Swiss Foundation hosted its annual gala at the Harvard Club of New York City, where it honored Dr. Vas Narasimhan for his outstanding contributions to strengthening the bilateral relationship between Switzerland and the United States. Over 350 guests gathered in recognition of Dr. Narasimhan's leadership and to celebrate the Sister Republics.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Robert J. Giuffra, Jr., Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Swiss Foundation, underscored the continued importance of nurturing the bilateral relationship: "For nearly 80 years, the American Swiss Foundation has forged lasting friendships and powerful connections between our two countries. We are Sister Republics; both of our nations value liberty, the rule of law, free enterprise and innovation. The American Swiss Foundation is privileged to honor Dr. Vas Narasimhan, one of the world's most respected and thoughtful corporate leaders."

"Switzerland and the U.S. sustain two of the world's strongest biomedical innovation ecosystems. With our largest R&D hubs in Basel and Cambridge, Massachusetts, Novartis partners across ecosystems and geographies to bring forward new medicines to address both rare diseases and society's greatest disease burdens, like cancer and cardiovascular disease.", said Vas Narasimhan, MD, CEO of Novartis. "In the pursuit of a healthier future for all, bringing together leaders from across Switzerland and the U.S. to engage in citizen-to-citizen diplomacy will continue to be an important part of collective progress. Alongside organizations like the American Swiss Foundation, Novartis remains dedicated to advancing the common values and commitment to innovation that are essential to improving human health."

Later in the evening, Mr. Giuffra presented the inaugural Ambassador Faith Whittlesey Leadership Award to Mrs. Diana Davis Spencer and Ms. Abby Spencer Moffat for their tireless efforts promoting the shared values and interests of the two countries. He noted the close friendship between Ambassador Faith Whittlesey and Ambassador Shelby Cullom Davis, the longest serving U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Mrs. Spencer's father and Ms. Moffat's grandfather. Both Ambassador Whittlesey and Ambassador Davis chaired the American Swiss Foundation.

In her acceptance speech, Mrs. Spencer expressed her deep gratitude for the recognition and

reaffirmed her commitment to advancing the shared interests of Switzerland and the United States: "The American Swiss Foundation not only plays a vital role in strengthening the enduring friendship between the sister republics but also helps me feel forever connected to a lifelong love of Switzerland and its people."

"Ambassadors Davis and Whittlesey would be amazed at how far the organization has come," noted Ms. Moffat, emphasizing the growth of the Young Leaders Program and sold-out event. "More importantly, they'd be incredibly proud of its path forward. ASF's leadership is persistent, passionate, and positioned to succeed. I'm excited for the future and look forward to staying involved with the Foundation for years to come."

The Honorable Edward T. McMullen, Jr. introduced the Swiss Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Jacques Pitteloud, who delivered the evening's closing remarks.

The event was attended by distinguished members of both the Swiss and American communities, including business leaders, elected officials, and members of the diplomatic corps. Fifty alumni of the Young Leaders Conference attended the Gala.

#### About the American Swiss Foundation

Founded in 1945 in response to World War II, the Foundation's mission is to connect and engage Swiss and American leaders. Towards the end of the 20th century, two former U.S. Ambassadors to Switzerland, Shelby Cullom Davis and Faith Whittlesey, ushered in a new era for the small organization. They ultimately transformed the Foundation from an organization that was primarily social to one that focused on nurturing and investing in the next generation of leaders in both countries.

In 1975, Ambassador Davis assumed an active leadership role with the Foundation. He served as chairman and president until 1989, and as honorary chairman until his passing in 1994. In 1989, Ambassador Whittlesey became chairman and president of the Foundation and launched the organization's flagship program, the Young Leaders Conference.

Today, alumni of the conference number more than 1,400 leaders who shape the futures of the two countries, including members of U.S. Congress and Swiss parliamentarians, entrepreneurs and business executives, media professionals, and public policy experts. The American Swiss Foundation's mission is to connect and engage Swiss and American leaders through inspirational programs to strengthen the shared values of liberty, the rule of law, and free enterprise.

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