

John Salazar, Acting Chairman of the Inter-American Foundation, helps Honor U.S. Senators and Representatives for Supporting Grassroots Development

ARLINGTON, Va. —

The Inter-American Foundation (IAF) has honored Sens. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), and Reps. Howard Berman (D-Calif.) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) for their extraordinary support

of the IAF's mission and their commitment to the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.



At a ceremony in the Hispanic Reading room of the Library of Congress on Oct. 14, **John Salazar**, acting chairman of the IAF board of directors, presented each of the

five members of Congress with a framed photograph representing the “Dante Fascell Award for Congressional Leadership in Grassroots Development.” The award was named for the late Democratic congressman from Florida who led the congressional initiative to create the Inter-American Foundation. The Oct. 14 event launched a series of celebrations marking the 40th anniversary of the creation of the IAF in December 1969.

“The IAF would not exist,” said **Salazar**, “if it had not been for Rep. Fascell’s compassion, his courage, his understanding of real need and his trust in the ability of very poor people to pull themselves out of poverty.” During his tenure in the House of Representatives from 1955 to 1992, Rep. Fascell served as chairman of its Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs and later as chair of the

House Foreign Affairs Committee. Upon his retirement, he said that he considered the creation of the Inter-American Foundation one of his finest achievements.



The five members of Congress honored with the IAF's award share Rep. Fascell's commitment to improving the lives of the poor and maintaining good relations among the countries of the Americas. Rep. Berman currently holds the position Rep. Fascell held as Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee; Rep. Ros-Lehtinen is ranking member. Sen. Dodd chairs the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Sen. Lugar is the ranking member and former chair on the Foreign Relations Committee. Sen. Leahy is the current chair of the subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs of the Appropriations Committee. After accepting their awards, Sens. Dodd, Leahy and Lugar and Rep. Ros-Lehtinen congratulated the IAF on the long-term impact of its small-dollar investments in Latin American and Caribbean communities over the years. They also recalled their days working with Rep. Fascell and shared their personal impressions of Rep. Fascell as a humanitarian and great American patriot.

Salazar also thanked the Library of Congress for partnering with the IAF and presented the Library with a framed photo. The awards ceremony was followed by a reception and opportunity for guests to view an exhibit of photos culled from the IAF's extensive archive of images that document the IAF's work over four decades.

The Inter-American Foundation, an independent foreign assistance agency of the United States government, furthers grassroots development by awarding grants directly to the organized poor in Latin America and the Caribbean and the groups that support their efforts. Since beginning operations in 1971, the IAF has made nearly 5,000 grants totaling nearly \$650 million. Together, the IAF and its grantees have worked to improve the conditions of hundreds of thousands of poor families in communities throughout the hemisphere.

For more on the IAF, log onto www.iaf.gov.