



Contact:

Izzy Goodwin
Fundraising and Events Coordinator, International House
(510) 643-6917
izzy@berkeley.edu
ihouse.berkeley.edu/gala

**International House at University of California, Berkeley To Recognize Alumni at
27th Annual Awards Gala**

BERKELEY, Calif. (April 20, 2015) – International House (I-House) at UC Berkeley will hold its 27th Annual Celebration and Awards Gala on Thursday, April 30th, 2015. The Honorable Earl Anthony Wayne ('72), United States Ambassador to Mexico, will be recognized as the *Global Ambassador of Peace and Public Service* and Gikas Hardouvelis, former Finance Minister of Greece, and his wife, Susan Bezjian Hardouvelis, will be honored as *I-House Alumni Couple of the Year*.

Now in its 27th year, this annual event raises funds to benefit the community of nearly 600 scholars residing at I-House, while honoring alumni who exemplify the I-House mission of fostering intercultural respect and understanding. “We are thrilled to publicly recognize this year’s recipients as champions of I-House principles,” says Dr. Hans Giesecke, Executive Director of I-House. “The Gala continues to serve as the signature event of I-House that alumni, students, and friends look forward to year after year.”

Proceeds from the Gala benefit The Fund for I-House. Joy Iwasa, Director of Development at I-House, points to this Fund as a critical resource, providing scholarships and financial aid, mission-centered programming, and maintenance for the historic 85 year old building. “Our programs and our home must continually evolve to meet the needs of our residents,” Iwasa says. The multi-million dollar renovation of the home’s historic dining commons is evidence of this consistent evolution.

The Dining Commons Transformation Project (DCTP) will, according to Iwasa, “enhance the I-House experience for residents through a more interactive dining experience.” For many residents, sharing meals is one of the core components of creating lasting bonds and engaging in meaningful dialogue.

Wendy Schmidt, the 2014 Alumna of the Year, and Eric Schmidt were inspired during a private tour after last year’s Gala to establish a matching gift challenge program to motivate support from fellow alumni. Their initial gift of one million dollars, and subsequent challenge match of an additional one million, is one of the largest in I-House history. It has prompted many gifts since its launch in 2014, and sponsorships for the Gala are included in gifts that qualify for the Match. Says Iwasa, “this matching initiative makes 2015 the most exciting year yet to become a Gala sponsor, because the Schmidt Challenge can double a sponsor’s impact.”

The Gala will be held Thursday, April 30th in Chevron Auditorium at International House, located at 2299 Piedmont Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94720. Tickets are \$275 per person, or \$150 for those under 35 years of age, and can be purchased online at ihouse.berkeley.edu/gala. For more information on our honorees, sponsorship opportunities, or to purchase tickets by phone, please contact Izzy Goodwin at (510) 643-6917.

###

International House is a non-profit living and learning program center at the University of California, Berkeley that fosters boundary-breaking discoveries, intercultural friendships, and global leadership for a world of greater understanding. Since 1930, International House has served students and scholars representing 150+ countries, including the U.S., creating a world-wide alumni community 60,000 strong. To learn more about International House, visit ihouse.berkeley.edu.