

566 words / 3.9 minutes

Presentation of Richard G. Lugar Award to Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch
Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University
Indiana University Auditorium
Friday, March 6, 2020
11:45 a.m.

Thank you, Provost Robel.

On behalf of Indiana University, it is my honor to present Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch with the Inaugural Richard G. Lugar Award.

Ambassador Yovanovitch is a fitting recipient of this award, which is bestowed on behalf of IU's Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies, which is named in honor of the late Senator Lugar and in honor of former Congressman Lee Hamilton, who is with us today.

This award honors Senator Lugar's legacy as a gentle giant of American diplomacy, and an internationalist who was renowned for his commitment to bipartisanship and to principled, pragmatic, and non-partisan foreign policy. He fully appreciated and embraced the fundamental role of diplomacy in making our country and the world more just and secure.

In this regard, the Senator was an ardent supporter of America's Foreign Service, and he worked assiduously to ensure that our career foreign service officers and others in the State Department had the resources they needed to perform their duties.

Senator Lugar also valued and sought to protect the important Constitutional role of Congress in foreign affairs and national security. And, like Representative Hamilton, he

was one of the most influential foreign policy voices ever to serve in the United States Congress.

I know the Senator would be tremendously proud, as is his family, that Ambassador Yovanovitch is the first recipient of this award.

In her 34-year career, the Ambassador worked on issues that were of central importance to the Senator. In fact, during Ambassador Yovanovitch's first tour in Ukraine, Senator Lugar visited the country to advance the effort to prevent the spread of dangerous weapons and technologies under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, also known as the Nunn-Lugar Program.

The Ambassador played a major role in shaping and implementing U.S. post-Cold War policy, helping to advance democracy, prosperity, security, and the rule of law in the post-Soviet era.

Ambassador Yovanovitch's distinguished career also reflects the principles we seek to uphold at Indiana University and the values we seek to instill in our students—a commitment to understanding other cultures and societies; an ability to master difficult subjects and to explain them clearly to non-expert audiences; a willingness to speak truth to power effectively and dispassionately; and a commitment to the best traditions of this country's founding principles and to its Constitution.

We are also proud to claim the Ambassador as one of our own, at least in a small way, as she is an alumna of IU's Summer Language Workshop, which is now part of the Hamilton Lugar School. Ambassador Yovanovitch studied the Russian language in 1979, and is part of a great tradition of Russian Studies and language experts from IU, including former U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Jim Collins; former Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates; and former director of policy planning for the State Department, Anne Marie Slaughter; all of whom have spoken at IU in recent years.

Madam Ambassador, as you see, this award sits atop a compass, symbolically reflecting Senator Lugar's principled integrity.

It also reflects what you have recently described as the obligation of a foreign service officer to remain faithful to her "true north," as you have done so brilliantly in dangerous and challenging posts overseas and, as all of us recently witnessed, in Washington, D.C.

And so, it is my honor and privilege to present Ambassador Yovanovitch with the Inaugural Richard G. Lugar Award.

Ambassador Yovanovitch will now deliver remarks, after which, she will take part in a discussion and question-and-answer session moderated by Ambassador Lee Feinstein, the founding dean of the Hamilton Lugar School.

Please join me once again in congratulating Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch and welcoming her to the podium.