

2023 Lamplighter Awards Dinner

October 24, 2023

Washington, DC

Welcome to the 2023 Lamplighter Awards dinner!

My name is Jeff DeBoer. I am honored to serve as the co-chair of this year's dinner, along with my good friend Norm Brownstein.

You may recall that I chaired this event last year when Norm was honored, along with Senator Roy Blunt.

I was deeply honored to be involved last year . . .and . . . if possible . . .I am even more honored to be here tonight.

. . . at this time in world history . . .a time that is indeed so troubling on so many levels.

I am heartened to see so many people of influence here this evening. . .so many representatives of the world's nations. . .so many business leaders and policymakers . . . all coming together in the same room to support such a strong and positive cause.

Thank you all for being here.

With deep respect, I would like to begin tonight with a moment of silence to reflect on the recent murder, violence, anger and discrimination inflicted without cause on innocent people living in or visiting Israel – people from nearly 30 countries around the world.

Many people, particularly younger people, may have mistakenly believed that the actions we saw toward the Jewish people are confined solely to history books.

But the truth clearly is that evil continues to thrive in the minds of millions of people around the world.

Now . . . please join me for a moment of silence to internally pledge that each of us will do our part, every minute, hour and day to reject evil. . .to help those in need . . . and to embrace the goodness of ethnic and religious diversity worldwide.

SILENCE

Thank you.

Now . . .regarding tonight's program . . .

It's no secret that the Lubavitch (**lu-bah-vitch**)
(Chabad -- **huh-baad**) led by Rabbi Shemtov does
remarkable things.

It provides support to those in need.

It provides opportunities to learn.

It feeds and provides clothes to those unable to help
themselves.

The work of Rabbi Shemtov is always important . . . but
perhaps never as important as it is today.

So . . . thank you all for attending and for your support.
You all have done a great job in helping provide the
resources for the Rabbi to continue his good work . . .

Well . . . his work is better than “good” . . .it is . . .as
Larry David might say . . .“pretty pretty good”! (Laughs)

I also want to express my personal respect for tonight's
honorees.

I know two of the honorees quite well.

John Fish is the Chairman of the organization I lead, the Real Estate Roundtable. Mr. Fish provides steady guidance, positive advice and consistent support. More importantly, John is a selfless person who always puts the health and safety of his 2,600 employees first.

Majority Leader Chuck Schumer is a giant in the policymaking world.

He is now history's longest serving Senator from New York.

Throughout my 40 plus year career in Washington, I have had the pleasure of working with countless elected officials. No one is more dedicated to public service than Leader Schumer, and no one works harder to address the needs of the disadvantaged than Leader Schumer.

And, finally, while I am not personally close to Dr. Kurt Newman, I have been very happy to meet him and to learn about his outstanding work.

These are extraordinary people.

They are true leaders.

They each have that indelible quality called "Optimism".

Optimism is essential to leading . . .it cannot be developed or faked.

Each of tonight's honorees believe deeply in the promise of freedom and the power of free people.

They do things because they are right, not because they are popular.

They pursue their goals with integrity, with dignity, with joy and with principle.

This is what Leaders do . . .and

Tonight's honorees are true leaders in every sense of these words – . . .they deserve our deep appreciation for their tenacious focus on consistently seeking to make our world a better place for all.

In conclusion . . . let me also acknowledge my wife Joan - who never seems rattled and always provides steady positive direction and guidance to me, our teenage son, and to her many education and philanthropic priorities.

Thank you Joan.

And thank you again Rabbi Shemtov for inviting me to participate in this wonderful event tonight.

It is truly my great honor.

Please enjoy the dinner and the evening.

Thank you.