

Special Edition—2008 Grantees Meeting and First Host Recognition Awards

Washington, DC – Two U.S. representatives (pictured below) and more than 70 congressional and Center staff, grantees, hosts, and program contractors gathered at the Library of Congress on May 20 for the first **Open World Host Recognition Event**, held in conjunction with the Center's annual organizational meeting for grantees. **Executive Director John O'Keefe** and Trustee and former U.S. **Ambassador James Collins** awarded 25 hosts with certificates honoring their own and their organizations' exemplary work on Open World exchanges. The Center plans to host additional host recognition events around the country in the future.

offered tips on designing program agendas to encourage specific outcomes. And Portland, ME sister-city official **Neale Duffett**, recently returned from celebrating "America Week" with alumni in Arkhangelsk, Russia, spoke enthusiastically on using reciprocal visits to deepen the Open World experience. Other sessions included talks on action plans for delegates, virtual networking, and alumni programs, and a special ceremony during which longtime Open World partner **Rotary International** received the Center's first **National Grantee of Merit Award** (pictured, upper right).



From left, Honorary Open World Board Chairman Sen. Ted Stevens (AK), former Rotary International director C. Grant Wilkins, Rotary Foundation Trustee Carolyn Jones, Chairman Billington, and Executive Director John O'Keefe admire the National Grantee of Merit award presented to longtime Open World partner Rotary International during the Center's May 20 Grantees Meeting.

Earlier in the day, three of the honorees presented to the 70-plus attendees at the grantees meeting. **John Pottenger** of the University of Alabama in Huntsville shared strategies for maximizing exchange-program quality. Next, Friendship Force's **Kay Rockwell**, of Lincoln, NE,



Honoree Carolyn Kunkel (in blue) and Melissa Kreidler (right) and other Host Recognition Event attendees look on as the award ceremony gets under way at the Library of Congress. Kunkel and Kreidler are involved with Open World hosting through Keystone Human Services International, a Harrisburg, PA nonprofit.



From left, Rep. Robert E. "Bud" Cramer (AL) and Trustee James Collins present John Pottenger of the University of Alabama in Huntsville with a certificate recognizing his outstanding contributions as an Open World/AED host coordinator. Rep. Cramer, who serves on the Center's board of trustees, also gave remarks during the Host Recognition Event.



Rep. Jan Schakowsky (IL) speaks in honor of constituent and Open World host Angelo Loumbas, the president-elect of the Rotary Club of Chicago. Loumbas was recognized for the work that he and area Rotarians have done on high-level rule of law exchanges.

Honoree **Bonnie Bissonette** (right) of Northcentral Technical College (NTC) in Wausau, WI, visits with Wisconsin Rep. David R. Obey's legislative director, **Will Painter**, after the host recognition ceremony. NTC, a grantee and Open World/World Services host organization, is an outstanding example of the many community colleges across the country that conduct exchanges for Open World.

