

Making a Difference

WASHINGTON, DC – One of Open World's first and strongest congressional supporters, just-retired Illinois Rep. **Ray LaHood**, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as secretary of transportation on Jan. 22. The former congressman helped launch Open World by officially hosting



Russian officials, accompanied by their Open World congressional host, then-Rep. Ray LaHood (center, in white and red shirt), tour a farm in central Illinois in September 1999.

one of the program's early delegations in his district in September 1999. Not only did then-Rep. LaHood greet his Russian guests on their arrival at the Peoria airport, but he and his wife held a reception for the delegation the following evening, and he also escorted his guests on farm tours and on a trip to **Illinois College** in Jacksonville.

Mr. LaHood regarded the visit as a wonderful opportunity to show the

participating Russian officials "how the world's greatest democracy operates," and he was also pleased that the delegation spent time in Springfield following "in the footsteps of one of our nation's greatest leaders, Abraham Lincoln." One of the participants, a Moscow city councilman, later said of the trip itinerary, "Each of the visits gave us concrete answers to concrete questions that we placed."

Secretary LaHood was a particularly staunch backer of Open World's acclaimed rule of law program, which his constituent and friend U.S. District Judge **Michael M. Mihm** of Peoria played a central role in developing. Then-Rep. LaHood opened and set the tone for one of the rule of law program's most moving orientation sessions: a heartfelt dialogue between Russian and American judges held in Washington, DC, on the second anniversary of 9/11. He was also on hand to welcome to the United States one of Open World's first judicial groups from Ukraine.

Rep. LaHood's support for Open World went beyond his personal involvement

in such key exchanges. He also used his position on the House Appropriations Committee to vigorously and effectively advocate for the program.

The Center congratulates Secretary LaHood on his new post and thanks him for his many contributions to the Open World Program over the years.



Then-Rep. Ray LaHood of Peoria, IL, addresses a Russian Open World rule of law exchange group in Washington, DC, in 2003.

In Memoriam



During his last visit to Ukraine, in 2008, Center for Safe Energy Co-director Fran Macy opens a meeting of a national coalition of Ukrainian environmental organizations.

Fran Macy, co-director of the **Center for Safe Energy**, a longtime Open World grantee, unexpectedly passed away on Jan. 20, 2009, at his home in Berkeley, CA. Macy was a dedicated Open World partner, helping organize exchanges that will have lasting benefits for the participants and their communities and countries. A website has been created in his memory at www.francismacy.com. All of us at the Open World Leadership Center send our condolences to his family, his staff, and his many friends around the world.

Hosting Corner

- Open World plans on issuing in early February its combined 2009 grant guidelines for hosting delegations from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Tajikistan. The Georgia program will have 60 participants; the other countries will each be allotted 50 participants.
- The Russian Cultural Leaders Program grant guidelines for 2009/2010 hosting are now posted at www.openworld.gov/uploads/pubsite/1233588427se346.pdf. Grant applications are due by Feb. 27.