2026 DINNER and AWARDS for ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Fred Marino
Ethical Leadership Award

I am thrilled and humbled by this honor, especially to share the program with my good friend Vardit and with Jordyn. Still, when the committee told me, I was taken aback. I said this must be the first award ever given to someone simply for not misusing his God-given gifts. From the start, I felt compelled to help move FASPE forward. Some of you may recall the scene in Zorba the Greek when the young protégé asks Zorba, "What do you do?" Zorba replies, "What do I do? I have hands, feet, and a head. They do the work. Who am I to choose?"

FASPE's Purpose and Impact

FASPE resonated with me because it offered the opportunity to work with emerging leaders and share meaningful "life lessons" to help them—and the organizations they lead—build a better world.

That was our original premise. The survey responses and stories we hear from our Fellows have confirmed it.

FASPE's Beginnings: The Power of Place

FASPE began with three of us: David Goldman, Andy Eder, and me. Andy is here tonight—Andy, please stand so we can recognize you.

On our first exploratory trip to Auschwitz, we were joined by our spouses, graduate students from Yale, and several Holocaust scholars. We wanted to experience the power of place firsthand. It was nearly overwhelming.

Did I mention that we went in February? The cold was bone-chilling, and pollution from wood-burning fires hung in the air.

A Thank-You to Peggy

My wife, Peggy, joined us on that adventure, little knowing it would be the first of many visits.

You can imagine the conversation: "Where would you like to go this year? Paris, Rome, maybe London? How about Auschwitz?" "Right, Auschwitz. Sign me up."

Peggy, thank you for putting up with me throughout this journey.

David and I have been friends for over 30 years. FASPE caused me to work very closely with David. For those of you who know David, you know that this is a tough assignment. David generally has 3 ideas in the same sentence. He proposes an idea, then he offers a counterproposal and then in a moment of self doubt, he offers a counter to his counter. At which point he turns to me and says, “What do you think?” I say “About what?” It makes for some very long conversations.

Philanthropy: Giving Our Time Thoughtfully

Finally, I’d like to say a word about philanthropy. In part, it means giving scarce resources: time and treasure. Our capacity to give financially varies, but time is the most limited resource for us all.

Our time on earth is finite, so we must give it thoughtfully. Devoting mine to something that transforms our Fellows’ lives and is personally rewarding is a true honor.

Thank you all.