



< BACK TO THE SUMMIT

# 2019 Summit

New York City



The American Academy of Achievement invited men and women of exceptional accomplishment to share their wisdom and experience with over 80 outstanding young scholars, scientists, artists, entrepreneurs, and public servants in New York City at the 53rd International Achievement Summit, September 13 -15, 2019.

## 53rd International Achievement Summit

From September 13 to 15, 2019, the American Academy of Achievement returned to New York City to celebrate the 53rd annual International Achievement Summit.

[ American Academy of Achievement (The). (Sep. 13-15, 2019). 53rd International Achievement Summit. Achievement.org.

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Academy Chairman and CEO Wayne R. Reynolds, Summit Host Chairman Catherine B. Reynolds, Summit Co-Host John Overdeck, and the delegates at Four Seasons Hotel New York during the International Achievement Summit.

More than 80 young scholars, scientists, entrepreneurs and public servants gathered to meet and exchange ideas with the world's outstanding leaders in the arts, sciences, business and public service, including 35 new recipients of the Academy's Golden Plate Award, as well as the Awards Council, composed of returning honorees of the Academy.



Anthony M. Kennedy, retired Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, welcoming the Academy delegates and members at the introductory dinner of the 53rd International Achievement Summit at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Among the new and returning members of the Academy were ten recipients of the Nobel Prize, nine recipients of the Pulitzer Prize, two Justices of the United States Supreme Court, and seven members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



Summit Host Chairman Catherine B. Reynolds, Led Zeppelin founder Jimmy Page, and musical theater composer and new honoree Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber at the Introductory Dinner of the International Achievement Summit.

Academy members, honorees and delegates stayed at the luxurious Four Seasons Hotel on Park Avenue, a unique venue designed by the late giant of modern architecture I.M. Pei.



Dr. Yann LeCun, pioneer of artificial intelligence, receives the Golden Plate Award from John Overdeck, the Summit Co-Host and a Co-Founder of Two Sigma Investments, during Introductory Dinner held at the Four Seasons Hotel.

In evening and daytime sessions of the Summit, also held at the Four Seasons, attendees engaged in intense colloquy over the pressing issues of the day, as well as matters of timeless significance.



American Academy of Achievement members, honorees and delegates gather for the Introductory Dinner and program of the 53rd International Achievement Summit in the Art Deco-inspired FIFTY7 at the Four Seasons Hotel.

At a time of nearly unprecedented political polarization, when public discourse frequently descends into rancorous bickering, the International Achievement Summit provides a unique opportunity for promising young men and women of different backgrounds, nations, beliefs, disciplines and persuasions to meet and learn from one another, and from the most accomplished practitioners in their fields.



Aerosmith front man Steven Tyler and Tony Fadell, developer of the Apple iPod and Nest intelligent home devices.

The interplay of myriad points of view and the knowledge drawn from varied disciplines and diverse experience produces expansive insights and opens new avenues for constructive dialogue.



General David H. Petraeus, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, meets rapper, singer, songwriter and producer Armando Christian Pérez, known professionally as "Pitbull," at the International Achievement Summit.

Delegates attending the Summit for the first time included Soros Fellows, MacArthur Fellows, fellows of the MIT Media Lab, young physicians and researchers from the Harvard-MIT Medical Scientist Training Program, startup entrepreneurs from Silicon Valley, a promising novelist from Nigeria, a city council member from Houston, the minority leader of Alabama's House of Representatives, and the lieutenant governor of Wisconsin.



2019 guest of honor Sir Van Morrison, member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame, in a conversation with fellow Belfast native Conor Houston, a business and community leader in Northern Ireland.

A host of eminent public servants participated in this year's Summit, including retired Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy and Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh. Two members of the President's cabinet — Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Benjamin S. Carson and Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao — were joined by former CIA Director General David Petraeus, former NATO commander General Joseph Ralston, and the Librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden.



Designer Thomas Heatherwick shares a photo with Lady Madeleine Lloyd Webber, director Sir Trevor Nunn, and musical theater composer Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber on the first night of the International Achievement Summit.

Distinguished members of the legal profession attending the Summit included ACLU Director Anthony Romero, Equal Justice Initiative founder Bryan Stevenson, and forensic DNA pioneer Barry Scheck.



David H. Koch Institute Professor at MIT, Dr. Robert S. Langer, with 2019 delegates Jeffrey Karp, Cesar de la Fuente Nunez, Michael Mitchell, Omid Veisesh, Tyler Grant, Christopher Alabi, Eric Appel, and Padmini Pillai at the Summit.

New Academy members Leymah Gbowee and Nadia Murad are both recipients of the Nobel Prize for Peace. Recipients of the Nobel Prize in Physics included Dr. Saul Perlmutter, Dr. Adam Riess, Dr. Donna Strickland and Dr. Kip Thorne. Dr. James Allison received the Nobel Prize in Medicine; Dr. Frances Arnold is a recipient of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry; Dr. Daniel Kahneman was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics.



Dr. Frances H. Arnold, the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, presents the Golden Plate Award to Dr. Donna Strickland, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics, at the 2019 International Achievement Summit in New York City.

Other brilliant innovators in the sciences, medicine and public health who graced the Summit were biomedical engineer Dr. Robert Langer; artificial intelligence developer Dr. Yann LeCun; satellite radio and biotechnology innovator Dr. Martine Rothblatt; integrative medicine advocate Dr. Andrew Weil; the co-developer of CRISPR gene editing technology, Dr. Feng Zhang; the Director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Francis Collins; and Dr. Steven Rosenberg of the National Cancer Institute.



Dr. Benjamin S. Carson, United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, presents the Golden Plate Award to Dr. Carla Hayden, the Librarian of Congress, at the Banquet of the Golden Plate Award gala ceremonies.

The realms of literature and journalism were represented by distinguished Academy members, including a recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature, novelist Orhan Pamuk, and the award-winning British novelist Ian McEwan. Recipients of the Pulitzer Prize included historian Rick Atkinson and biographers A. Scott Berg, Ron Chernow and T.J. Stiles; former Poet Laureate of the United States Rita Dove; playwright Lynn Nottage; and photojournalist Lynsey Addario, who was joined by the award-winning war correspondent and photojournalist James Nachtwey.



Tony Award-winning film and theater director Julie Taymor presenting the Golden Plate Award to British designer Thomas Heatherwick at the Academy of Achievement's 53rd International Achievement Summit in New York City.

Distinguished leaders from the worlds of business and finance included the Chairman of Maverick Capital, Lee Ainslie; the CEO of Breyer Capital, James Breyer; Kleiner Perkins Chairman John Doerr; Universal Music Group Chairman Sir Lucian Grainge; Lockheed Martin Chairman Marillyn Hewson; Tudor Group founder Paul Tudor Jones II; and the mastermind behind the iPod and Nest digital home devices, Tony Fadell.



Guest of honor Dr. Martine Rothblatt, Founder and Chairman of United Therapeutics and the creator of SiriusXM Satellite Radio, addresses delegates and members during a symposium of the International Achievement Summit.

This year's Summit was particularly rich in attendees from the worlds of popular music, from Broadway to rock and roll, rhythm and blues, and hip-hop. Iconic musicians in attendance included the composer and impresario Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber, as well as Rock and Roll Hall of Fame honorees Roger Daltrey and Pete Townshend of The Who, Led Zeppelin founder Jimmy Page, Peter Gabriel, blues great Buddy Guy, Sir Van Morrison, Smokey Robinson and Steven Tyler.



Host Chairman of the 2019 Summit Catherine B. Reynolds, 2014 Academy delegate Her Royal Highness Princess Reema bint Bandar Al Saud, the first woman to serve as Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United States, and 2019 guests of honor, Armando Christian Pérez, and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao at the introductory dinner of the 53rd International Achievement Summit at the Four Seasons Hotel in New York City.

They were joined by Grammy Award-winning folk singer Judy Collins, hit record producer Lukasz “Dr. Luke” Gottwald and rapper Armando Christian Pérez (aka “Pitbull”). The arts were also represented by award-winning directors of film and theater such as Sir Peter Jackson, Sir Trevor Nunn, Bartlett Sher and Julie Taymor, ballet great Edward Villella, choreographer Justin Peck, and groundbreaking designer Thomas Heatherwick.



Dr. Francis S. Collins, Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), addressing gender equity in science policy.

The Host Chairman of the 2019 Summit was Catherine B. Reynolds, the Chairman, CEO and President of the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation. The Summit's Co-Hosts were John Overdeck, the Co-Founder and Co-Chairman of Sigma Two Investments, and Walgreens Boots Alliance CEO Stefano Pessina.



Kleiner Perkins Chairman and Silicon Valley investor L. John Doerr discusses Academy delegate Jini Kim and her healthcare data analytics company Nuna as an example of "Objectives and Key Results" management philosophy.

Delegates, honorees, Academy members and guests convened at the Four Seasons on Friday evening for an elegant dinner. After gracious welcoming remarks from Summit Host Catherine Reynolds, Justice Anthony Kennedy greeted the assembly. Recently retired from the Supreme Court after 30 years of distinguished service, Justice Kennedy reflected on the felicity of the Academy meeting in New York City, where so much of the nation's history has been enacted and where so much of its cultural life has flourished. He recalled observations of the founding fathers on the city's unique character, reflected in George Washington's decision to take his oath of office in a public ceremony in New York City.



Members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame: Peter Gabriel presenting the Golden Plate Award to The Who's Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey at the Banquet of the Golden Plate ceremonies during the Achievement Summit.

This year's Summit commenced a few days after the 18th anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terror attacks on New York City. Justice Kennedy read a poem written by a student at the city's Stuyvesant High School — evacuated on the morning of September 11, 2001 — a poem he suggested reflected something of the city's indomitable spirit. He ended by quoting Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*: "I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks."



Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, addresses Academy delegates and members at a symposium at Four Seasons Hotel during the 53rd annual International Achievement Summit in New York City.

Academy Co-Host John Overdeck presented the Academy's Golden Plate Award to Dr. Yann LeCun, pioneer of deep learning technology. Dr. LeCun was the originator of the convolutional neural networks that underlie much of the work being done in artificial intelligence today, as well as the voice and character recognition software essential to the devices we use in daily life.



Sir Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh and their daughter Katie Jackson between symposium sessions. Director Jackson and screenwriter Walsh both earned Oscars for their enormously successful cinema trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*.

The internationally acclaimed director of film, theater and television, Sir Trevor Nunn, recalled his long collaboration with Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber, the composer of such beloved musicals as *Cats*, *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Sir Trevor noted that the composer — a member of the Academy's Class of 2019 — has donated over £20 million (\$26.6 million at this writing) to music and arts education on both sides of the Atlantic through the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation.



Dr. Kip Thorne, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics for his gravitational wave discoveries, addresses delegates.

After a video presentation reviewing Lord Lloyd Webber's spectacular career, the man himself took the stage, where he took part in a brief conversation with the Pulitzer Prize-winning national correspondent of *The Washington Post*, Mary Jordan. Lord Lloyd Webber emphasized that his great success was essentially due to only undertaking projects that he cared about deeply and found personally exciting. He expressed concern about the current state of musical theater, noting the current predominance of "jukebox musicals" — composed of existing popular songs — over the traditional musical with a complete score of original music. In discussing the work of his foundation, he argued forcefully for the importance of music, art and drama to society as a whole.



Founder and Director of the Equal Justice Initiative Bryan Stevenson and ACLU Director Anthony D. Romero meet with delegates Samuel Alemayehu, Lt. Governor of Wisconsin Mandela Barnes, Dr. Padmini Pillai and Bianca Tylek.

Led Zeppelin founder and guitarist Jimmy Page gave a warmly nostalgic account of the first time he heard Van Morrison perform, and of the enthusiasm with which he had followed Morrison's career ever since. After a video montage of Morrison's half-century of music-making, including hits like "Here Comes the Night," "Brown Eyed Girl," "Moondance" and "Crazy Love," Sir Van engaged in a conversation with fellow Belfast native Conor Houston. A community and business leader in Northern Ireland, Houston's familiarity with Morrison's career enabled him to draw out the usually reserved singer and songwriter.



Founder of the Tudor Group and the Robin Hood Foundation, Paul Tudor Jones II, sharing his vision of “venture philanthropy” with the delegates and members at a symposium during the International Achievement Summit.

The pair reviewed Morrison’s early years as a blues musician and the development of his solo career as a singer and songwriter. Morrison disclosed that he decided to become his own producer when he “started reading the contracts” and decided he wanted to “own the means of production.” On reflection, he looked at all of his music and creative work as an effort “to create order out of chaos.” Morrison’s belief in poetry and music as fundamental values was evident throughout his blunt answers. As the conversation began with a reference to Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken,” it drew to a close with the first and last lines of T.S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets* — “In my beginning is my end... ..and in my end is my beginning.” The ever-laconic Morrison ended with the words, “Life is difficult; take it from there.”



Nobel Prize winners Dr. Frances H. Arnold and Dr. Kip Thorne meet Academy delegate Dr. Katherine Bouman of the California Institute of Technology. Bouman led the development of "CHIRP," an algorithm for imaging black holes.

The first morning session of the Summit began with Dr. Donna Strickland, creator of the world's most intense laser pulses. Strickland reflected that she is only the third woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Physics in the award's 113-year history. Although she usually prefers to discuss the substance of her work, she took this occasion to address the issue of gender imbalance in the sciences. During a question-and-answer session, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Francis Collins, supported her call for greater participation by women in making science policy and affirmed that he no longer participates in all-male panels or advisory bodies.



Thomas Heatherwick shows his design for Google's new campus in Mountain View, California. Elaborate tent-like structures of concave photovoltaic panels (PV) form a billowing canopy over the flexible workspaces and gardens.

Attorney, author and entrepreneur Dr. Martine Rothblatt reflected on her extraordinarily varied career. The founder of the SiriusXM satellite radio system, she created a biotechnology company to find a cure for her daughter's lung disease, which has since saved the lives of thousands around the world. As an attorney and author, Dr. Rothblatt has also been a successful advocate for the rights of the transgendered and is the author of visionary works on the subjects of xenotransplantation and cyber ethics. She reflected on the extraordinary good fortune of the present generations of men and women in comparison with the centuries of poverty and serfdom that most of their ancestors endured. She urged the Academy's delegates to "use the skills you have to make life better for others," and imagined the spirits of those long-dead ancestors saying, "For God's sake, enjoy your life."



General Joseph W. Ralston, USA, former Supreme Allied Commander Europe, presents the Golden Plate Award to Marillyn A. Hewson, the Chairman, President and CEO of Lockheed Martin, at the Banquet of the Golden Plate gala.

John Doerr, the Chairman of Silicon Valley venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins, gave an illustrated presentation of the management philosophy he learned from Intel founder Andy Grove. Called OKR — for “Objectives and Key Results” — it calls for managers to “set the right goals for the right reasons.” As one of many examples of OKR in action, he cited the efforts of Academy delegate Jini Kim.



Awards Council member Sir Peter Jackson, the director, writer, and producer of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, presenting the Golden Plate Award to Dr. Martine Rothblatt, Founder and Chairman of United Therapeutics and the creator of SiriusXM Satellite Radio, at the Banquet of the Golden Plate gala ceremonies at the St. Regis Hotel.

As a nine-year-old child, Kim had helped her Korean immigrant parents enroll in Medicaid to assist her autistic brother and save the family from bankruptcy. As an adult, Kim founded Nuna, a company that built Medicaid's first centralized data warehouse, facilitating access to medical care for Americans of limited means. Doerr exhorted the Academy's delegates to apply the principles of OKR in their own lives, setting realistic but meaningful objectives and establishing clear metrics for assessing their progress. He has provided every Academy delegate with a copy of his book *Measure What Matters*.



Bestselling Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk, a recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, affirms his faith in literature at a symposium session at the Four Seasons Hotel in New York City during the International Achievement Summit.

The next speaker of the morning was author T.J. Stiles, who received the Pulitzer Prize for Biography for *The First Tycoon*, a life of railroad magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt, and the Pulitzer Prize for History for his book *Custer's Trials*, on the life of the controversial Civil War general who died at the Little Bighorn. In recounting his own trials, Stiles recalled the words of his revered martial arts master, who told him, "If you want to climb to the top, you have to cry the whole way."



Barry Scheck, the Co-Founder of the Innocence Project, presenting the Golden Plate Award to Bryan Stevenson, Founder and Executive Director of Equal Justice Initiative, a human rights organization in Montgomery, Alabama.

Another tale of perseverance in the face of even more extraordinary challenges was told by the next speaker, Leymah Gbowee, a recipient of the Nobel Prize for Peace. Gbowee successfully mobilized the women of Liberia to force the nation's warlords to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the country's brutal civil war. She recalled the enormous difficulties she had to overcome to pursue higher education in the United States, a world away from the simple village life she had known in Liberia. She has since assisted many young women from her country to travel the same road. With great humor and warmth, she recalled her experience traveling on an airliner in the United States, casually dressed among well-dressed businesspeople, and their astonishment when she received a message informing her that she had won the Nobel Prize.



Awards Council member Justice Anthony M. Kennedy presenting the Golden Plate Award to Brett Kavanaugh, the Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, at the International Achievement Summit in New York City.

The final speaker of the Saturday morning session was Dr. Kip Thorne, whose theories and discoveries inspired the film *Interstellar*. Dr. Thorne received the Nobel Prize in Physics for his work leading to the discovery of gravitational waves — disturbances in the curvature of space-time. Thorne conceived the experimental framework for detecting gravitational events of this kind and campaigned forcefully for the construction of the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO). In his address to the Academy, Dr. Thorne recalled the skepticism he encountered on the way to building a 1,000-member team to staff the experimental facility. The first evidence of a gravitational wave, in 2016, confirmed a prediction Albert Einstein had made in his general theory of relativity 100 years earlier. Today, gravitational waves are observed on a regular basis and can be tracked on any smartphone with the app Gravity Events. An engaging and compelling speaker, Dr. Thorne easily conveyed the excitement of his area of astrophysical research.



T.J. Stiles, the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize in Biography and History, addressing the Academy of Achievement delegates and members during a symposium session at the International Achievement Summit in New York City.

The first speaker of the Summit's afternoon session, Paul Tudor Jones, founded the Tudor Group of investment companies, as well as Robin Hood, the New York-based foundation dedicated to directly addressing issues of childhood poverty in the nation's largest city. Jones attributed many of society's present ills to the identification of profit maximization as the sole responsibility of business management. Jones believes that the application of this philosophy to management justified a culture of unchecked greed that led to massive job outsourcing, the opioid crisis, and a 500-percent increase in wealth disparity since 1970. "Business is too important not to be an agent of change," he said.



Roger Daltrey, the lead singer of The Who, greets a friend and fellow honoree, Motown legend Smokey Robinson.

Noting that in the United States, the private sector is four times larger than government and 40 times larger than philanthropy, he proposed a model of “venture philanthropy” based on Andy Grove and John Doerr’s concept of OKR. To create an index of social responsibility for the socially conscious investor, he found that given a choice, people are drawn to companies they believe serve the interests of employees, customers, communities, and the planet.



Summit Co-Host Stefano Pessina, CEO of Walgreens Boots Alliance, presents the Golden Plate Award to investor and famed venture capitalist John Doerr at the Banquet of the Golden Plate gala ceremonies at the St. Regis Hotel.

The fantastically imaginative designer Thomas Heatherwick gave a detailed illustrated presentation of his work. As a student, he became frustrated with the uniformity of modern architecture and set out to build something new and more interesting himself, although he had no formal training in architecture. Following his own axiom, “It’s better to be weird than boring,” he designed what described as “a giant tent” made of solar panels. As an example of his innovative design process, he demonstrated how he repurposed a complex of 90-year-old grain silos in Cape Town, South Africa into the building that now houses the city’s Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art.



The Who's guitarist and songwriter Pete Townshend, bluesman Buddy Guy, and rock great Peter Gabriel meet at a reception at the Banquet of the Golden Plate at the St. Regis Hotel during the International Achievement Summit.

Since winning the Nobel Prize for Literature, the Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk has often been asked why he writes. In his address to the Academy, he shared a list of reasons, ranging from “I write because I love the smell of ink and paper” to “I write because I am so angry at everyone.” In surveying the world today, he suggests that a fear of humiliation is the driving force behind many conflicts. A novel, he said, teaches “a secret hierarchy of values,” in the “childish hope” of finding that we all resemble one another more than we know. “I believe in the novel more than anything,” he said. “My religion is literature.”



Anthony D. Romero, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, presenting the Golden Plate Award to Dr. Daniel Kahneman, a recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economics, at the 2019 International Achievement Summit.

Art of another kind came up for discussion as Steven Tyler, the lead singer of Aerosmith, took the stage. The child of a musical family, he recalled lying under the family piano as his father practiced scales overhead. Reflecting on his own early struggles to make it in the music business, he stressed the importance of finding collaborators. In Joe Perry and the other members of Aerosmith, he found comrades who were willing to sacrifice all else to pursue their dreams of musical glory. Reflecting on the excess of their early years, he quipped, "Of all the things I've ever lost, I miss my mind the most." Taking questions from the audience, he said, "I got my dream — to make others happy, even when I wasn't."



Dr. Robert S. Langer, Institute Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, presenting the Golden Plate Award to Dr. Feng Zhang, Co-Developer of CRISPR gene editing technology, during the 2019 Achievement Summit.

The Librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden — also the daughter of classical musicians — described herself as “an accidental librarian.” As a young liberal arts graduate, she spent her days in the library between job interviews, until a friend tipped her off about a job in a South Chicago branch library, where she was encouraged to get a graduate degree in library science. When President Obama asked her to assume leadership of the Library of Congress, the world’s largest library, he tasked her with making the treasures of the library more accessible to the public. She enumerated a few astonishing examples of the library’s vast holdings, including the contents of Lincoln’s pockets the night he died, and locks of hair from the heads of Thomas Jefferson and Ludwig van Beethoven.



2019 Academy delegates (from left to right) Dr. Raja Srinivas, Tim Sadler, Kamal Obbad, Dr. Ryan Truby, and Dennis Grishin at the Banquet of the Golden Plate gala held at the rooftop ballroom of the St. Regis Hotel in New York City.

Civil rights attorney Bryan Stevenson recounted how he began his education in a segregated school system where there was no high school for black students. At age 16, as an outstanding high school student, he participated in the Academy of Achievement's annual Summit. It was the first time he had ever traveled from his small town, and the experience inspired him to go to college. He chose law school, he said, because graduate studies in any other field have undergraduate requirements, but "You don't have to know anything to go to law school."



Tony Award-winning theater director Bartlett Sher presenting the Golden Plate Award to Lynn Nottage, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, at the Banquet of the Golden Plate Award ceremonies at the St. Regis in New York City.

Stevenson's law practice has focused on the disproportionate prosecution and sentencing of impoverished Americans and defendants of color. The number of incarcerated Americans has grown from 300,000 to 2.2 million since 1972, he observed, and the United States now has more imprisoned citizens than any country in the world. It is estimated that one in every three African American males will face the prospect of incarceration at some point in their lives. His organization, the Equal Justice Initiative, has won major legal challenges to unjust and excessive sentencing in criminal cases.



National Medal of Arts recipient Edward Villella presents the Golden Plate Award to Justin Peck, a recipient of the Tony Award for Choreography, at the Banquet of the Golden Plate gala held at the St. Regis Hotel in New York City.

Stevenson also led the drive to create the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, commemorating thousands of victims of racist violence. The Great Migration of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North in the 20th century was a movement of refugees fleeing terror, he asserted, and called for America to embrace a narrative of truth and justice, and consciously come to terms with the crimes of the past, as Germany was forced to do after World War II and the Holocaust. "Injustice prevails where hopelessness persists," he said. "The opposite of poverty is not wealth, but justice."



2019 Academy honorees Paul Tudor Jones II, Steven Tyler, and Armando Christian Pérez, with Summit Co-Host John Overdeck at the Banquet of the Golden Plate Award gala held at the rooftop ballroom of the St. Regis Hotel.

On a lighter note, Armando Christian Pérez, the rapper, producer and entrepreneur known as “Pitbull,” gave an exuberant account of his unlikely rise in the Miami music scene. He recounted the experiences of his parents as refugees from Cuba, his own troubled youth as a high school dropout, and his redemption through the universal language of music. “We all speak music,” he said.



Theatrical director Sir Trevor Nunn presents the Golden Plate Award to award-winning novelist and screenwriter Ian McEwan at the Banquet of the Golden Plate gala ceremonies during the International Achievement Summit.

He enjoyed some good-natured jabs at his own industry. “The beautiful thing about the music business is half of them don’t know music and half of them don’t know business.” He also discussed the charter school he has created, with its Sports, Leadership, Arts and Management (SLAM) curriculum. Recalling the struggles of his forebears, he quoted the Cuban aphorism “*Pasos cortos, visión larga*” — “Short steps, long vision.”



Singer, songwriter and humanitarian Peter Gabriel presenting the Golden Plate Award to Sir Lucian Grainge, the Chairman and CEO of Universal Music Group, during the 53rd International Achievement Summit in New York City.

Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh began his address by joking, “When I was invited, I said I would only come if I could follow Pitbull.” The Justice spoke warmly of teachers and mentors who had the greatest influence on him. As a recent law school graduate, Kavanaugh clerked for Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, and he praised Justice Kennedy’s deep learning as well as his example of unfailing civility on the bench.



Jimmy Page, guitarist and founder of Led Zeppelin, Summit Host Chairman Catherine B. Reynolds, and Associate Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh at the Banquet of the Golden Plate gala during the International Achievement Summit.

Among his teachers, he cited the priest who explicated the Bible verse Matthew 25:35, “When I was hungry, you fed me...” as the inspiration for his pursuit of public service. He spoke of the rewards of providing direct help to someone in need, such as by serving food in a homeless shelter, as he has continued to do while serving on the Court. In discussing his commitment to diversity in the judiciary, he recalled the influence of his mother, a schoolteacher who later went to law school and eventually became a judge. Kavanaugh is the first Justice on the Supreme Court to hire an all-female staff of law clerks. He announced proudly that the majority of the Court’s clerks are now female.



Rita Dove, former United States Poet Laureate, presenting the Golden Plate Award to Nadia Murad, recipient of the Nobel Prize for Peace, during the Banquet of the Golden Plate Award gala at the St. Regis Hotel in New York City.

Nadia Murad, a recipient of the 2019 Nobel Prize for Peace, is a Yazidi woman who was kidnapped by ISIS in Iraq and escaped to become an advocate for survivors of war crimes and human trafficking. When asked who inspires her, she says that everyone she meets inspires her. The world leaders she meets fall into two categories: those who understand her story empower her in her work, and those who cannot understand her story inspire her to continue, "Because I can't let them decide our fate."



2019 Academy delegates Whitney Hermandorfer, Aimee Brown, Gregory Brown, Carmen G. Iguina Gonzalez, and Usha C. Vance at the Banquet of the Golden Plate during the International Achievement Summit in New York City.

She spoke of her special concern for refugee children, who are often denied education, which makes them vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups such as ISIS or Boko Haram. Murad was the only one of her siblings to go to school, but her mother always assured her “the real wealth is knowledge.” Murad believes that her education enabled her to resist ISIS brainwashing and to overcome the taboos that prevented other victims of war crimes from speaking of their experience.



Dr. Steven A. Rosenberg, Chief of Surgery at the National Cancer Institute, presents the Golden Plate Award to Dr. James P. Allison, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Medicine, at the International Achievement Summit in New York.

The photojournalist James Nachtwey has spent his career documenting some of the most harrowing calamities of our times. Nachtwey illustrated his talk with stunning photographs from the world's war zones and disaster areas: the hellish orphanages of communist Romania; a famine-stricken wasteland in Sudan; the epidemic of birth defects in Vietnam, caused by exposure to Agent Orange; the ravages of the opioid epidemic across America; the horrors of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. He hopes that his photographs demystify euphemisms such as "boots on the ground" and "collateral damage." Photography, he said, allows the victims of these tragedies to say, "This happened to us here, in this place." He ended this sobering presentation with the words, "As we share these photos, we bear witness. Let us not forget."



Smokey Robinson performs his classic songs to close the Banquet of the Golden Plate at the St. Regis ballroom.

The afternoon's symposium ended with a presentation by Academy Chairman and CEO Wayne Reynolds. Reynolds discussed plans for the Global Forum for Freedom and Justice, which will be an anchor institution in downtown Birmingham, Alabama, that advances the historic legacies of its groundbreaking civil rights pioneers as a global forum to inspire and teach leadership skills in the 21st century. The Global Forum will be an interdisciplinary center of scholarship, learning, research, and public civic engagement, offering a wide collection of digital archives, recordings, and a research library. The modern civil rights struggle will be a crucible towards better understanding complex contemporary social issues. The Forum will encourage a more meaningful exploration into these heroic role models and, as a result, provide insights that will empower and educate future generations of young leaders.



ACLU Executive Director Anthony Romero moderating a bipartisan discussion at the final symposium session of the 53rd International Achievement Summit with two Academy delegates, Kate Britt, the President and CEO of Business Council of Alabama, and Anthony Daniels, the Minority Leader of the Alabama House of Representatives.

The culmination of the International Achievement Summit was the Banquet of the Golden Plate, held Saturday evening at the St. Regis Hotel. In a stirring ceremony, 34 new members were inducted into the Academy, each presented with the Golden Plate Award by a past recipient of the honor. Following dinner, the assembly was treated to a concert by a 2019 inductee of the Academy, Motown great Smokey Robinson. Effortlessly leading a full band and vocal group, with a voice that has defied the passage of the years, Robinson treated the audience to a choice selection of his timeless hits, interspersed with sly anecdotes about Motown comrades Stevie Wonder and others. His set built in intensity, from the tenderness of “Being With You” and “I Second That Emotion,” to the pulsing four-four rhythm of “Tears of a Clown,” rising to a climax with a cathartic rendition of “Tracks of My Tears.” By the end of the set, delegates and Academy members, including Robinson’s fellow members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, were all on their feet as the wizard of Motown led the audience in a joyous singalong of his classic “My Girl.”



Four legendary singer-songwriters and musicians: Judy Collins, Steven Tyler, Buddy Guy, and Jimmy Page enjoy a rare private tour of *Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll*, the first major exhibition in an art museum dedicated in its entirety to the iconic instruments of rock and roll, on view at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

After the Banquet, Academy members and delegates repaired to the Four Seasons for a final reception and dance party on an interactive video dance floor. Although conversation lasted long into the night, a full house gathered for the last session of the Summit the following morning.





Jimmy Page addressing American Academy of Achievement members and special guests in front of a display of his 1975 dragon-embroidered costume and 1971 Gibson EDS-1275 Doubleneck. Page donated seven guitars, his stage outfits and equipment to the *Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll* exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The Sunday morning symposium began with a colorful visual presentation by Dr. Feng Zhang, a pioneer of CRISPR technology, the revolutionary gene-editing technique that is transforming the study of all living things. A former student delegate of the Academy of Achievement, he returned this year as an honoree. Now a professor of neuroscience at MIT, he led the team that successfully applied CRISPR technology to human cells for the first time. Through a series of ingenious slides, he effectively dramatized the chemistry of gene editing, and in clearly accessible terms, laid out the enormous potential CRISPR presents for new developments in medicine, agriculture and more.



Secretary Elaine L. Chao, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy and Mrs. Mary Kennedy, and Angela Chao and Jim Breyer at a reception in the elegant setting of the Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court at The Metropolitan Museum of Art during the American Academy of Achievement's International Achievement Summit in New York.

The British author Ian McEwan is among the most acclaimed novelists in the English-speaking world. All his life, he pointed out, critics have predicted the death of the novel, but it refuses to die. He suggested that the novel remains “the best mode of representing the flow of consciousness.”



Summit Co-Host John Overdeck, Co-Chairman and Co-Founder of Two Sigma Investments, with his wife, Laura, and their two sons at a dinner held in the Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court at The Metropolitan Museum of Art during the American Academy of Achievement's International Achievement Summit in New York.

He discussed at length the research he undertakes to give imagined lives the texture of reality. As an example, to supply the background for the neurosurgeon protagonist of his novel *Saturday*, he spent two years accompanying a neurosurgeon in his work, even touching a living brain in the operating room. By the end of the two years, he could impersonate a neurosurgeon in front of a medical student.



Two top photojournalists and war photographers: Lynsey Addario and James Nachtwey in the Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court at The Metropolitan Museum of Art during the Achievement Summit in New York.

In his latest novel, *Machines Like Me*, he explores the ethical dilemmas raised by artificial intelligence. In his next, he borrows the premise of Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, in which an ordinary man is mysteriously transformed into a giant insect, to create a satire of British politics in the era of Brexit. He pointed out that the relationship of the individual to the state is a perpetual subject of the novelist, and that novelists are among the first to be imprisoned by dictators when they seek to suppress dissent.



National Institutes of Health Director Dr. Francis S. Collins and his wife, Diane, and Mark Crosswhite, the Chairman and CEO of Alabama Power Company, and his wife, Jane Emily, at a reception at FIFTY7 at the Four Seasons Hotel in New York City during the American Academy of Achievement's 53rd annual International Achievement Summit.

A delegate of the 2019 Summit, the collegiate gymnastic champion Katelyn Ohashi spoke after showing a video of her virtuosic performance in artistic floor exercise. She discussed the challenges of focusing on such a grueling discipline for her entire childhood and adolescence, and the emotional cost of being judged constantly on her physical appearance. She related the necessity of learning to define herself as a human being, apart from her appearance and athletic performance. “The choices we make decide the life we live,” she stated, and now that her career as a college athlete is over, looked out at the room full of CEOs and entrepreneurs and suggested, “Maybe one of you guys could hook me up with a job.”



American Academy of Achievement members and guests listen as Buddy Guy, a titan of the blues, performs on stage in the Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

In the final segment of the morning's symposium, the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, Anthony Romero, led a discussion with two young leaders from Alabama who, though they come from opposite sides of the political divide, have found opportunities to collaborate in improving life for all the citizens of their state.





Legendary blues guitarist and singer George "Buddy" Guy, a recipient of the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, performing in the beautiful Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Katie Britt is the President and CEO of the Business Council of Alabama, while Anthony Daniels is Minority Leader of the Alabama House of Representatives. Britt, a former chief of staff to U.S. Senator Richard Shelby, is a Republican, while Daniels leads the Democrats in the lower house of the state legislature. Despite their differences, the two have found common ground on many issues. In a model of disinterested public service, the pair explored improvements to their state's schools and reforms of the state's prisons and criminal justice system. The 2019 Summit's last morning session concluded on a note of bipartisanship, and a vivid demonstration of young leaders rising above partisan differences to pursue practical solutions to solve serious problems.



Catherine and Wayne Reynolds address the Academy of Achievement members and guests at the conclusion of dinner in the Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Sunday evening, Academy members gathered at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, where Jimmy Page guided members on a tour of the exhibition *Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll*. The exhibition included some of the most iconic instruments of modern music, such as those played by The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, Keith Richards and Eric Clapton. Academy honoree Buddy Guy enjoyed seeing the vintage Fender Telecaster that was the primary instrument of his old friend and bandmate, the late blues innovator Muddy Waters. Jimmy Page lent several instruments to the exhibition from his own collection, including the two Les Paul guitars he played on his classic Led Zeppelin albums. One guitar, stolen from him in 1970, disappeared for 45 years before it was recovered in 2015.



American Academy of Achievement members and guests enjoy an intimate dinner in the Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court, a space designed as a classical French garden, presenting outdoor Italian and French sculptures from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

After the viewing of these, as well as musical treasures such as Louis Jordan's saxophone, Ringo Starr's drums, and the piano played on tour by Jerry Lee Lewis, the assembly gathered for an intimate dinner in the museum's Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court. In the shadow of Canova's monumental statue of Perseus and other masterpieces of the classical tradition, Academy members were treated to a performance by blues master Buddy Guy. "I was born to play guitar..." he sang, and proved it with a typically intricate and soulful display of fretboard wizardry.



Anthony M. Kennedy, retired Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and Steven Tyler, a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame, exchanging ideas at dinner at The Met during the Summit.

Longtime Academy members, the honorees of the Academy’s Class of 2019, and the Academy’s young delegates will carry memories of a remarkable weekend in New York as they return to their respective endeavors. We hope that the exchange of ideas they enjoyed — and the formation of lasting bonds between men and women of many nations, young and old, across academic disciplines, professions and beliefs — will continue for many years to come.





A 1977 Academy student delegate and 2019 honoree Bryan Stevenson, Founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, addresses the International Achievement Summit in New York.