

Remarks by Mack McLarty
Introduction of Abe Lowenthal at Woodrow Wilson Awards
Smithsonian Museum of Natural History
Washington, DC
September 28, 2017

It's a pleasure and privilege to join in celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Latin American Program... and to honor some of the hemisphere's most extraordinary leaders:

Lorenzo Mendoza Giménez... Kristine Tompkins... and former president Fernando Henrique Cardoso, a great thinker, writer, and statesman, whom I am lucky enough to also call my friend.

Tonight, however, I have the happy task of introducing another great leader and friend of mine—the man who founded the Latin American Program: Abraham Lowenthal.

I first met Abe during my time in the White House, as I was beginning to explore Pan American Highways as President Clinton's special envoy.

Abe was heading up the Pacific Council on International Policy, and he quickly became one of my most valued mentors and advisors.

Even as a relative newcomer to hemispheric affairs, I knew I'd hit the jackpot—kind of like getting investment advice from Warren Buffett! There's simply no one better.

Abe combines his intellect, eloquence, and expertise with a wonderful manner and charm.

He's a builder—not only of influential policy organizations, but also of bridges among individuals, institutions, and countries.

From USC to Brown... from the Wilson Center to Brookings... from the Inter-American Dialogue to the Pacific Council... from more than a dozen books to literally hundreds of articles... he's been tireless in his curiosity, and generous in sharing his wisdom.

His friend Mario Vargas Llosa, who couldn't be here tonight, sent in these words of appreciation:

[Read Vargas Llosa comments]

Put simply, Abe personifies the spirit of public service for which he's being honored tonight.

And even after he has told me for the 15th time that the '67 Red Sox were the greatest team ever, his insights never gets stale.

[Look at Abe:]

Abe, I've read that your childhood heroⁱ was the great left fielder Ted Williams, about whom it was said that he was “everything that was right about the game of baseball...and everything that is right about this country.”ⁱⁱ

Your own field of play has been foreign policy... but the same could be said about you.

On behalf of the Wilson Center, I'm delighted to announce the creation of the Abraham F. Lowenthal Fellowship, to bring people from Latin American and the Caribbean to the Wilson Center as visiting fellows—furthering the hemispheric cooperation and understanding you've done so much to promote.

Thank you for your scholarship, your leadership, and your friendship... and congratulations on receiving this Woodrow Wilson Award for Public Service.

Ladies and gentlemen, Abraham Lowenthal...!

ⁱ <http://www.zocalopublicsquare.org/2010/04/26/abraham-lowenthal/personalities/in-the-green-room/>

ⁱⁱ "[Ted \(Williams\)](#) was everything that was right about the game of baseball. If you really think about it, he was everything that is right about this country. It is certainly a sad day for all of us. He is a man who lost *five years* of service time serving his country. What he could have *done with those years* in the prime of his life ... it would be awesome to really put those numbers together. He would have probably been the greatest power hitter of all time." - Pirates Manager [Lloyd McClendon](#)