

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Philadelphia , Pennsylvania)

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For Immediate Release

October 29, 2007

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

President George W. Bush today announced recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civil award. Established by Executive Order 11085 in 1963, the Medal may be awarded by the President "to any person who has made an especially meritorious contribution to (1) the security or national interests of the United States, or (2) world peace, or (3) cultural or other significant public or private endeavors." President Bush will honor these recipients at a White House ceremony on Monday, November 5, 2007.

**Gary S. Becker** has broadened the spectrum of economics and social science through his analysis of the interaction between economics and topics such as education, demography, and family organization. His work has helped improve the standard of living for people around the world.

**Oscar Elias Biscet** is a champion in the fight against tyranny and oppression. Despite being persecuted and imprisoned for his beliefs, he continues to advocate for a free Cuba in which the rights of all people are respected.

**Francis S. Collins** has revolutionized genetic research. Under his leadership, the Human Genome Project mapped and sequenced the full human genome and greatly expanded our understanding of human DNA.

**Benjamin L. Hooks** has dedicated his life to equality, opportunity, and justice. He is a pioneer of the Civil Rights movement, and his efforts to extend the full promise of America to all its citizens have helped bring our Nation closer to its founding ideals.

**Henry J. Hyde** has served America with distinction. During his career in the House of Representatives, he was a powerful defender of life and a leading advocate for a strong national defense and for freedom around the world.

**Brian P. Lamb** has elevated America's public debate and helped open up our government to citizens across the Nation. His dedication to a transparent political system and the free flow of ideas has enriched and strengthened our democracy.

**Harper Lee** has made an outstanding contribution to America's literary tradition. At a critical moment in our history, her beautiful book, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, helped focus the Nation on the turbulent struggle for equality.

**Ellen Johnson Sirleaf** has helped heal a country torn apart by conflict through perseverance, personal courage, and an unwavering commitment to building a more hopeful future for her homeland. The first woman elected president of an African nation, she has worked to expand freedom and improve the lives of people in Liberia and across Africa.

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