

[*George Mason University Center for Social Entrepreneurship to Hold Conference Headlined by Senator Mark Warner, Bill Shore and Mario Morino*](#)

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Body

George Mason University issued the following news release:

The Mason Center for Social Entrepreneurship will host the fourth installment of the Accelerating Social Entrepreneurship (ASE) conference series on November 10, 2011 at Founders Hall on Mason's Arlington Campus.

The ASE series annually convenes hundreds of leaders from the nonprofit, academic, business and government sectors for conversations that are designed to advance the field of social entrepreneurship. This year's theme, "Accelerating Social Entrepreneurship in the Age of Austerity," explores how the global economic crisis can provide opportunities to forge new approaches to old problems.

This year's conference will open with a plenary conversation between U.S. Senator Mark Warner (Va.) and Bill Shore, chairman and CEO of Share Our Strength. "I'm thrilled to be participating in the Accelerating Social Entrepreneurship Conference along with Senator Mark Warner, who has been a huge champion of the powerful role social entrepreneurs can play in creating real change," said Bill Shore. The two will discuss major implications and opportunities for social challenges and social entrepreneurship in this age of limited resources.

"I delivered a keynote address at the first Accelerating Social Entrepreneurship Conference in 2007, and I'm proud to see how these important conversations have contributed to society," said Senator Warner. "Now more than ever, it is critically important that we convene leaders from the public, private and nonprofit sectors to devise and implement solutions to our social and economic challenges. I'm looking forward to attending this year's conference and continuing these important discussions."

During the conference, the Mason Center for Social Entrepreneurship, in partnership with the Center for Consciousness and Transformation, will present the inaugural Social Innovation Champion Awards, which recognize individuals for their groundbreaking work to develop and apply innovative, sustainable and scalable solutions to the world's most pressing social problems.

Three social entrepreneurship luminaries, Mason alumna Muna AbuSulayman (BA '96, MA '96), Mario Morino, and Diana Wells, will be honored. A cash prize will be given to a social enterprise of each winner's choosing. Awardee Mario Morino will also deliver the lunch keynote, during which he will discuss with George Mason University President Alan G. Merten the role of managing to outcomes in an era of scarce resources.

"We are honored to highlight the important work of three groundbreaking social entrepreneurs who are positively impacting the lives of people across the globe," said Greg Werkheiser, managing director of the Mason Center for Social Entrepreneurship. "We have enjoyed working with the Center for Consciousness and Transformation, under

Sarah Curtis

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the direction of Associate Dean Nance Lucas, with the goal of demonstrating that Mason is committed to help solve the world's great challenges and to support those who dare to lead."

The Social Innovation Champion Awards honor individuals who have made significant contributions to advancing social entrepreneurship, demonstrated a measurable impact in fostering social change and displayed exemplary leadership in the field of social innovation. The next round of awards, to be given in spring 2012, will honor students and faculty at Mason who have made contributions to the field.

More information about the conference, including registration, can be found at www.masoninnovation.org/ase.

About the 2011 Social Innovation Champion Award recipients:

Muna AbuSulayman is the secretary general and executive director of The Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Talal's Kingdom Holding Company. She oversees operations and multimillion-dollar projects in domains spanning poverty alleviation, community development, disaster relief, Islam/West dialogue and female empowerment. AbuSulayman is a well-known figure in the Middle East and served as the first Saudi woman to host a television show on MBC, the premier Pan-Arab television channel, when she co-hosted an all-women talk show entitled "Kalam Nawaem" (Softly Speaking). She was also Saudi Arabia's first woman to be appointed by the United Nations as a Goodwill Ambassador and won numerous awards for her work on behalf of women, as well as being recognized as one of the Most Influential Arabs in the world in 2010 and 2011. AbuSulayman holds a BA and an MA from George Mason University.

Mario Morino is co-founder and chairman of Venture Philanthropy Partners and chairman of the Morino Institute. His career spans more than 40 years as entrepreneur, technologist and civic and business leader. Morino retired from the private sector and founded the Morino Institute in 1994 to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, advance more effective philanthropy, close social divides and understand the relationship and impact of the Internet on our society. In 2000, Morino co-founded Venture Philanthropy Partners as a philanthropic investment organization that strategically concentrates investments of money, expertise and human resources to improve the lives and boost the opportunities of children of low-income families in the National Capital Region. Morino co-authored the book "Leap of Reason: Managing to Outcomes in an Era of Scarcity." Morino holds a BBA from Case Western Reserve University. For more information about "Leap of Reason," visit www.leapofreason.org.

Diana Wells, PhD, serves as president of Ashoka. Since becoming president in 2005, she has worked in tandem with founder Bill Drayton. During her tenure as president, she has overseen a budget that tripled, as well as expansions to Western Europe, the Middle East and East Asia. To ensure a solid infrastructure, Wells has driven organizational progress around technology, finance and talent development. Earlier in her career, she launched Ashoka's fellowship program in order to connect, resource and support the work of Ashoka Fellows. In 1997, Wells developed and implemented Ashoka's "Measuring Effectiveness" program to better understand the progress of social entrepreneurs toward systemic social change. This widely respected program was one of the first standard tools to measure the impact of social entrepreneurship. Wells formerly taught anthropology and development at Georgetown University and has authored and edited numerous journal and book publications. She holds a PhD from New York University and a BA from Brown University. For more information about Ashoka, visit www.ashoka.org.

About the plenary speakers:

Bill Shore serves as the chairman and CEO of Share Our Strength, a national nonprofit that is working to end childhood hunger in America. He founded the organization in 1984 with his sister Debbie and a \$2,000 cash advance on a credit card. Since then, Share Our Strength has raised and invested more than \$315 million in the fight against hunger and has won the support of national leaders in many fields. Shore is also the chairman of Community Wealth Ventures, Inc., a for-profit subsidiary of Share Our Strength that offers strategy and implementation services to foundations and nonprofits. He formerly served on the senatorial and presidential campaign staff of former U.S. Senator Gary Hart and served as chief of staff for former U.S. Senator Robert Kerrey.

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Shore is currently an advisor for the Reynolds Foundation Fellowship program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government. He has also authored four books focused on social change, including his most recent, "The Imaginations of Unreasonable Men." Shore holds a JD from George Washington University and a BA from the University of Pennsylvania.

Mark Warner was elected to the U.S. Senate in November 2008, and serves on the Senate's Banking, Budget, Commerce, and Intelligence committees. Warner has established himself as a national leader in efforts to find bipartisan, commonsense solutions to reduce the federal deficit. He is a champion for small businesses, and has worked to improve the performance and accountability of federal agencies while also celebrating stand-out members of the federal workforce. From 2002 to 2006, Warner served as Governor of Virginia during its worst economic recession in 20 years. During his time in office, he ultimately turned a record budget deficit into a surplus. He focused on improving education and expanding economic opportunity, and recruited 135,000 new jobs into Virginia during his term. When Warner left office, Virginia was recognized as the nation's "best-managed state," the "best state for business" and the state offering the best educational opportunities. Warner received a JD from Harvard Law School and a BA from George Washington University.

About the George Mason University Center for Social Entrepreneurship

George Mason University, in partnership with The Phoenix Project, a not-for-profit corporation and catalyst for social innovation, launched the Mason Center for Social Entrepreneurship in March 2011. The center sparks scalable and entrepreneurial solutions to our world's greatest social challenges while developing and preparing the next generation of leaders. Find out more at www.masoninnovation.org.

About the Center for Consciousness and Transformation

Initiated in 2009, the Center for Consciousness and Transformation is an interdisciplinary research and teaching center whose mission is to understand the nature and effects of individual and group consciousness and its role in transformative learning and social change. Find out more at <http://cct.gmu.edu/>

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