



Keynote Speaker and Honoree



AMBASSADOR ERIC RUBIN

Senior Fellow, Center for European Policy Analysis, former President of the American Foreign Service Association, and former U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria
ASIRT Leadership in Global Diplomacy for Road Safety Award

Ambassador Eric Rubin is a results-focused leader with experience leading teams of all sizes. For more than 38 years, he served as an active-duty career Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. State Department, 1985-2023. As Ambassador to Bulgaria, Eric helped achieve significant steps toward military modernization under the NATO umbrella as well as major strides toward energy independence and diversification. As President of the American Foreign Service Association, Eric advanced the Foreign Service as a profession while winning significant gains for my colleagues in terms of funding, legislation, and legal protection. As Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, he managed our country's response to the first Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and contributed to progress in peace negotiations in the Caucasus, Cyprus, and the Aegean. As Deputy Chief of Mission in Moscow, Eric supported our Ambassador in leading a team of over 1,200 people at a time of Russia's invasion of Georgia and then a fleeting improvement in relations. In all of his assignments in Washington and overseas, Eric focused on delivering concrete results for our country's policies and national security. He also emphasized support for colleagues and their family members, with a focus on career development and morale. Eric is a skilled and widely experienced public speaker, in person as well as on television, radio and podcasts. He has working proficiency in speaking and reading French, Spanish, Thai, Russian, Ukrainian and Bulgarian.

Honorees



DAN RYAN

Vice President Government and Public Affairs, Mazda North American Operations
ASIRT Corporate Leadership in Road Safety Award

Dan Ryan is the Vice-President of Government and Public Affairs for Mazda North American Operations. Based in Washington, DC, Dan has worked for Mazda since 2001 and has held this position since April 2018.

Dan oversees Mazda's government affairs activities in the United States. He is involved in a wide variety of automotive issues and handles both congressional and regulatory issues. He also works on vehicle related issues at the state level and has testified in state legislatures on vehicle security and service information issues. He has worked on behavioral issues and was a member of the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety. He is also responsible for environmental public policy issues including CAFE, GHG, and ZEV. Dan was previously the Manager of Safety and Government Affairs, working on NHTSA regulations and inquiries and consumer safety programs including IIHS Top Safety Pick.

Prior to working at Mazda, Dan worked in the service division at American Honda Motor Company for 15 years as a field service representative and a regional customer relations manager.

He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York at Albany.



JULIE ANNE FRIEND

*Director, Office of Global Safety and Security
The Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, Northwestern University*
ASIRT Road Safety Champion in Education Abroad Award

Julie Anne Friend has worked in the field of international education for over 20 years. Her scholarship and advocacy related to higher education travel risk management has contributed to the development of standards in the field. From 2006-2016, she wrote regularly for NAFSA's International Educator (IE) on topics related to risk and insurance. In 2017, Ms. Friend contributed three chapters to a NAFSA text titled [Crisis Management for Education Abroad](#). In 2018 her essay, "[How sexual misconduct threatens the security industry: real and reputational risk](#)," shifted the discussion from external to internal risks. In 2020, she penned a chapter for another NAFSA text, [Undergraduate Research Abroad](#), to promote best practices for managing risks associated with independent research. Most recently, she collaborated with colleagues from industry and higher education to address the risks of climate change in "[Preparing for the impacts of climate change: reducing the risks of international travel](#)." Her latest project, with two colleagues, is a textbook about legal issues in higher education and university-sponsored international travel inspired by three years of teaching a course on Law and Ethics in Higher Education for Northwestern's School of Education and Social Policy.

Julie's service to the field has been equally robust. She served on U.S. Department of State's [Overseas Security Advisory Council](#) as a Technical Analyst from 2008-2014 and then as one of two constituent representatives for academia from 2014-2018, when she rotated off to serve on OSAC's new Women in Security steering committee until 2021. Julie has traveled in nearly 40 countries and has lived in both France and Zambia, but these days her true passion is playing the upright bass in two Chicago-area bluegrass bands. In addition to earning a Juris Doctor in Law and a Master of Arts in English from Michigan State University, Julie has a Bachelor of Science in Speech Communications from Syracuse University, where she was also in the first cohort of [Remembrance Scholars](#), a prestigious award in honor of the 35 Syracuse University students who lost their lives in the Pan Am 103 explosion over Lockerbie, Scotland on December 21, 1988. She is a licensed attorney in the state of Michigan.



JILL BASHEIN AHARON

Community Leaders
ASIRT Aron Sobel Community Service Award

Jill is a true Washingtonian, born in Washington, DC, and grew up in Montgomery County, Maryland. She graduated from the Charles E Smith Jewish Day School with Aron in 1987 and then proceeded to acquire her BS in Management and Consumer Studies from the University of Maryland with Aron in 1991.

While most of her peers, including Aron, went to medical school or law school, Jill joined her family's business, AlphaGraphics, with the intention to go the management track but ultimately find her calling with Sales although she never had liked salespeople.

Today, Jill is a real estate consultant, licensed in MD, DC and VA and affiliated with Coldwell Banker Realty since 2010. Her certifications include Certified Luxury Property Specialist, Seniors Real Estate Specialist and At Home with Diversity Certification. Recent awards include International President's Circle Worldwide 2022, Bethesda Magazine and Washingtonian Top Agent and Real Trends 2023 America's Best.

Jill and her family have been active volunteers and supporters of ASIRT since soon after its inception. ASIRT's mission, accomplishments, and goals grew in importance as Jill's boys got older and became

drivers and travelers. It is hard to believe it's been over 28 years since we heard of the horrible bus crash in Turkey. We are left with the memories of Aron's infectious smile, dimples, and the sparkle he always had in his eyes.

Jill lives in North Potomac with her husband, Jacky. They have 3 sons, Yoni, David and Ben and can be spotted most Saturday mornings in the Beth Sholom Sephardic Minyan. She enjoys traveling, cooking, playing mahjong, and spending time with family and friends.



STACY MENSCH SCHLACTUS

Community Leader

ASIRT Aron Sobel Community Service Award

Stacy is an alumna of the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School (CESJDS). She first met Aron at Camp Tel Shalom, became high school classmates (Class of '87), and graduated from the University of Maryland with Aron in 1991.

Stacy returned to CESJDS as a parent in 2007 and has served on the Board of Directors since 2014. She is currently President-Elect and Development Committee Co-Chair. Stacy also served on the Board of Directors at the University of Maryland Hillel and continues to support Hillel with fundraising and recruitment.

Stacy studied Early Childhood Special Education at Bank Street College of Education Graduate School in New York City and taught at The Churchill School and Temple Shaaray Tefila. Locally, Stacy has worked as a teacher, educational support specialist, and inclusion specialist at Washington Hebrew Congregation's Early Childhood Centers, The Ivymount School, and B'nai Israel Schilit Nursery School.

Stacy and her husband David are proud parents of Ari, Shelby, Daniel, and Coby. Together, they run David's dental practice and are active members at B'nai Israel Congregation in Rockville, where they have served on the Board and various committees. Stacy enjoys reading, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.

Stacy remembers Aron for his endearing and infectious smile, sweet laugh, athleticism and sportsmanship, wit and intellect, and remarkable kindness. These attributes, along with Aron's thoughtful and generous nature, continue to inspire Stacy daily.

Master of Ceremonies



AMBASSADOR MARC GROSSMAN

Vice Chair, The Cohen Group,

former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs,

and former U.S. Ambassador to Turkey

U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (2011-2012)

Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (2001-2005)

Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (1997-2000)

U.S. Ambassador to Turkey (1994-1997)

Ambassador Grossman served as the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, the State Department's third ranking official, until his retirement in 2005, after 29 years in the U.S. Foreign Service. As Under Secretary, he helped marshal diplomatic support for the international response to the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. He also managed US policies in the Balkans and Colombia and

promoted a key expansion of the NATO alliance. As Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, he helped direct NATO's military campaign in Kosovo and an earlier round of NATO expansion. In Turkey, Ambassador Grossman encouraged vibrant U.S.-Turkish political, military, and economic relations.

Ambassador Grossman was a Vice Chairman of The Cohen Group from July 2005 to February 2011. In February 2011, President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton called Ambassador Grossman back to service as the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Ambassador Grossman promoted the international effort to support Afghanistan by shaping major international meetings in Istanbul, Bonn, Chicago and Tokyo. He provided U.S. backing for an Afghan peace process designed to end thirty years of conflict and played an important part in managing US relations with Pakistan. Ambassador Grossman returned to The Cohen Group in February 2013.

Ambassador Grossman is the Chairman of the Board of the Senior Living Foundation of the Foreign Service. He also serves as a Trustee of the University of California Santa Barbara Foundation and is a member of the Board of the C&O Canal Trust.

Raised in Los Angeles, California, Ambassador Grossman has a BA in Political Science from the University of California, Santa Barbara and an M.Sc in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Welcome



ROCHELLE SOBEL
ASIRT Founder and President

Rochelle Sobel is an experienced educator in the Washington, DC area, and has traveled to many countries to hold forums and raise awareness of road safety issues. Rochelle served as a member of the World Health Organization's Global Road Safety Steering Committee and was an original member of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration. She presents on the issue of global road safety at numerous forums and conferences, including the United Nations Stakeholders Forum on Road Safety; the NAFSA Annual Conference; the Sixth National Conference on Injury Prevention and Control; and "Dinner and Debate on Road Safety," hosted by the Embassy of France. Rochelle delivered the closing plenary address at the historic 2009 Moscow Ministerial Conference and at the opening of the 2019 Sweden Ministerial Conference.

Rochelle represents ASIRT as a member of the UN Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC) and served on the steering committee for the establishment of a Global Alliance of Road Safety NGOs, on whose board she now serves. She, along with ASIRT staff and in-country representatives from civil society, was actively involved in a major, five-year road safety initiative funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies. ASIRT was one of six international consortium partners, focused on reducing road crash injuries and fatalities in ten countries, including Egypt, Turkey, and Kenya.

Rochelle has contributed to notable ASIRT publications including *Faces Behind the Figures*, produced in collaboration with WHO; "Injury Control and Safety Promotion," 2003, Vol. 10; *ASIRT Country Road Safety Reviews (RSR)* on 90 countries and the *Road Safety Toolbox for the Study Abroad Community*.