

COUNCIL OF 1000 AWARD AND FUNDRAISING GALA OF THE  
GERMAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION OF THE USA®

# *Gala Program*

**Honoring Mr. Peter Thiel**

2018 Distinguished German-American of the Year™



**German-American  
Heritage Foundation** of the USA®

**GERMAN-  
AMERICAN  
HERITAGE  
MUSEUM** OF THE USA™

*"Home is behind, the world ahead,  
and there are many paths to tread  
through shadows to the edge of night,  
until the stars are all alight."*

*J. R. R. Tolkien*

**Cover: „europa“ (2016), 52 x 79.5 in, from the “outer space” series  
Provided courtesy of the artist Michael Najjar**

<http://www.michaelnajjar.com/>



## President's Letter

Dear Honored Guests, Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA® (GAHF), it is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to our **32nd Annual Council of One Thousand Award and Fundraising Gala**.

Every year, since 1987, GAHF – chartered as the United German-American Committee – has recognized the outstanding leadership and achievements of an American of German-speaking ancestry. Our **Distinguished German-American of the Year™ Award** is the only national honor of its kind.

Tonight, we bestow this year's honor on **Peter Thiel**, Chairman of Palantir Technologies, Inc. and Co-Founder of Pay-Pal. Mr. Thiel, a native of Frankfurt am Main, Germany is a far-seeing investor and thinker who changed the way we communicate, network, and conduct online transactions in a global world – helping to connect people and businesses across countries and continents. He is, also, politically active and has spoken extensively about the interaction between science, technology, and the economy before U.S. and German audiences.

Thanks to the abiding efforts of our late President-Emeritus, Bern E. Deichmann, we established a physical presence in our nation's capital eight years ago. Since the opening of our museum at Hockemeyer Hall in the old Penn District, we have been able to present a great variety of exhibits.

Most recently, we showed a traveling display from the Frankfurt-based German National Library called "**Exile: Experience and Testimony, 1933-1945**". It describes the limited migration options that were available to émigrés seeking refuge from the National Socialist dictatorship and the everyday challenges experienced by the close to 140,000 people who were fortunate to be granted asylum in the U.S. Currently, we are presenting the varied histories of several GAHF membership organizations, some of which date back to colonial times.

We are delighted that you were able to join us this evening and very grateful for your continued involvement, support, and sponsorship which make possible the achievements, programs and aspirations that keep GAHF a vibrant institution for all of us to enjoy and experience.

Once again, a warm welcome to all of you, and thank you for your presence to honor Peter Thiel on this special occasion celebrating German-American heritage and friendship.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hardy von Auenmüller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hardy von Auenmüller, President

*Letter  
from the  
President*

# The Award

Since 1987, the Distinguished German-American of the Year™ Award has provided national recognition for outstanding leadership and achievement of an American of German-speaking ancestry in business, the arts, education, science, politics and society.

## Previous Recipients of the Distinguished German-American of the Year™ Award

1987	Mr. Karl Ehmer †, NY	2004	Mr. Albert Wurz, PA
1988	The Hon. Ruth E. Denk, NY	2005	Dr. Günter Blobel, MD, PhD †, NY
1989	Mr. Werner Fricker †, PA	2006	General H. Norman Schwarzkopf †, & Mrs. Brends Schwarzkopf, FL
1990	Mr. Eric Braeden, CA	2007	Mrs. Margrit B. Krewson †, DC
1991	Mr. Albrecht Maier, NJ	2008	Dr. Jesco von Puttkamer †, VA & Mrs. Wilma L. Schmidt †, posthumously, PA
1992	Mr. Heinz C. Prechter †, MI	2009	The Hon. William R. Timken, Jr., OH
1993	Dr. George J. Beichl †, PA	2010	The Hon. Paul A. Volcker, NY
1994	Ms. Doris Meissner, WI	2011	Mr. Robert B. Zoellick, MD
1995	Mr. William Hetzler, NY	2012	Chef Walter Staib, PA
1996	Mr. Bruno Karnas, PA	2013	Mr. Bern E. Deichmann †, PA
1997	Mr. Gerald R. Kainz †, DC	2014	Mr. Helge H. Wehmeier, PA
1998	Prof. Dr. Otto L. Walter, Esq. †, NY	2015	Mr. Doug Oberhelman, IL
1999	Mr. C. John Muller †, PA	2016	Mr. Philip Frederick Anschutz, CO
2000	Mr. John Patrick Schmitz, Esq., DC	2017	Mr. Robert M. Hitt III, SC
2001	Mr. Detlef "Ted" Hierl †, NJ		
2002	Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann, OH		
2003	Mr. Walter Brand †, CA		

## Distinguished German-American of the Year™ Award

2018



Peter Thiel, a native of Frankfurt, Germany, is an entrepreneur and investor. He started PayPal in 1998, led it as CEO, and took it public in 2002, defining a new era of fast and secure online commerce.

In 2004 he made the first outside investment in Facebook, where he serves as a director. The same year he launched Palantir Technologies, a software company that harnesses computers to empower human analysts in fields like national security and global finance.

He has provided early funding for LinkedIn, Yelp, and dozens of successful technology startups, many run by former colleagues who have been dubbed the “PayPal Mafia.” He is a partner at Founders Fund, a Silicon Valley venture capital firm that has funded companies like SpaceX and Airbnb.

He started the Thiel Fellowship, which ignited a national debate by encouraging young people to put learning before schooling, and he leads the Thiel Foundation, which works to advance technological progress and long-term thinking about the future.

Peter is also the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future*.

# The Menu

## Reception Passed Hors d'Oeuvres

Grilled bratwurst tidbits with Dijon mustard

Grilled Cajun duck bites served with Creole sauce

Miniature potato pancakes with apple sauce

Watermelon canapes with feta, basil, and balsamic gaze

## First Course

Chilled pea soup served with rolls and butter

## Main Course - Selection

Dual entree of boneless porkloin stuffed with plums served with ginger plum sauce & Salmon Wellington filet wrapped in puff pastry with duxelles and cucumber-dill sauce accompanied by Tomato Provençale and homemade spaetzle

Zucchini boats filled with a colorful medley of julienne vegetables

## Dessert

Bonaparte pastry basket filled with amaretto cream, garnished with fresh berries

Apple dessert wine

Coffee and tea service

Guten Appetit!



**6:45 pm**

**Reception**

Music by Mason Music Productions

**7:30 pm**

**Opening Remarks**

Aaron Lewis, Gala Chairman

**Ambassador's Greeting**

Dr. Emily Haber, Ambassador of the  
Federal Republic of Germany

**Acknowledgements & Introductions**

**National Anthems**

Andrew Adair

**7:50 pm**

**Gala Dinner**

**8:30 pm**

**Award Ceremony & Presentation**

Welcome by GAHF President  
Hardy von Auenmüller

**Dialogue**

Peter Thiel

and

Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg

Followed by Special Presentation

**9:45 pm**

**End of Program**



SENATOR TED CRUZ  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 11, 2018

German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA (GAHF)  
719 Sixth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Friends,

It is an honor to join you in celebrating Peter Thiel as the 2018 Distinguished German-American of the Year. His work as an entrepreneur and philanthropist has touched countless lives and made an immeasurable impact on our world. It is a pleasure to recognize the difference he has made as an American and friend of liberty.

A man who has helped transform the way our world connects and engages in commerce, Peter has redefined business and philanthropy with his passion for connecting thought-leaders, researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs with the resources needed to launch their ideas into orbit. His vision and initiative have opened doors for millions of men and women worldwide as they have used the programs created in great thanks to his pioneering spirit. Whether launching careers with the help of LinkedIn, staying connected to family and friends across the globe with Facebook, or finding the services that meet their needs through Yelp, Texans have powerful tools to build their American dream because of Peter's vision and commitment to the next great idea.

As we reflect on the paradigm shifting work done by one driven by innovation and imagination, we celebrate Peter Thiel's lasting impact on our world and look forward to his work to come.

Sincerely,

Ted Cruz  
United States Senator





Embassy  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Washington

Message of Greeting from  
Ambassador Dr. Emily Haber  
on the Occasion of  
The 2018 Distinguished German-American  
of the Year Award Presentation  
September 21, 2018



Washington, September 21, 2018

Peter Thiel's innovative mind and eye for trends in tech has shaped the economic landscape not only in the U.S. but around the world. As a co-founder of PayPal, an early investor at Facebook and founder of Clarium Capital, he not only anticipated such developments, but also actively influenced them. It is a great pleasure to see the German-American Heritage Foundation present him with 2018 Distinguished German-American of the Year Award.

Mr. Thiel was born in Frankfurt am Main. Although his parents moved to the United States shortly after his birth, Frankfurt, home of major German corporations and financial institutions, matches Mr. Thiel's unparalleled later success as an entrepreneur and large-scale investor. But Mr. Thiel hasn't just invested in technology. He's also invested in future thinkers. The Thiel Fellowship offers young people the opportunity to think in new ways and pursue innovative ideas that advance our societies as a whole. He has also always remembered his roots and kept strong ties to his home country – holding German citizenship and visiting Germany on a regular basis. Mr. Thiel is a true example of German-American friendship and cooperation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the German-American Heritage Foundation for its deep commitment to cultivating German-American friendships and bonds as well as promoting the achievements of German-speaking immigrants and their contributions to the development of the United States. For more than 40 years, you have contributed to the preservation of our common cultural heritage. The *Wunderbar together – Germany and the U.S.* year-long public diplomacy campaign offers us the opportunity to celebrate and foster German-American friendship together. I personally invite you to take part in our activities and events dedicated to showcasing the unique links between Germany and the United States through heritage, common values and shared interests.

My best wishes to you all for a memorable awards ceremony.

Emily Haber

Herrn  
Peter Thiel

Frankfurt am Main, den 21.9.2018

Sehr geehrter Herr Thiel,

Sie sind ein visionärer, erfolgreicher Unternehmer und ein Ausnahmetalent mit dem Gespür für die richtigen Investitionen zum perfekten Zeitpunkt.

Die Stadt Frankfurt am Main als Ihr Geburtsort und als aufstrebender FinTech-Standort verfolgt voller Respekt Ihre außergewöhnliche Karriere. Sie haben als kluger Investor viele Start-ups in Weltunternehmen verwandelt.

Durch Ihren Mut, Ihren Ehrgeiz und Ihre Wagnis gehören Sie zu den erfolgreichsten Amerikanern mit deutschen Wurzeln unserer Zeit und inspirieren viele Deutsche. Vielleicht gelingt es dank Ihrem Vorbild mehr Gründerinnen und Gründer auch in Frankfurt mit amerikanischem Optimismus zu beflügeln.

Herzlichen Glückwunsch zur Ehrung.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen



Uwe Becker  
Bürgermeister und  
Stadtkämmerer

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[\(212\) 605-0559](tel:(212)605-0559)

September 21, 2018

Mr. Peter Thiel  
c/o The German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA  
719 Sixth Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Peter,

My warmest congratulations to you on being honored as the 2018 Distinguished German-American of the Year by the German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA!

As a proud American of German background myself — and one who has in my books highlighted other Germans whose lives warrant special recognition -- I am deeply grateful to the GAHF for conferring this honor each year, and particularly grateful to you for accepting it. Your entrepreneurial leadership and philanthropic generosity, as well as your advocacy for liberty and your appreciation of the great Rene Girard, make you someone I am honored to call a friend and brother in faith.

God bless you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eric Metaxas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Eric Metaxas

Author of *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr Prophet Spy* and  
*Martin Luther: The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World*

**2014 - Honoree Helge Wehmeier at Mayer Brown, LLP**



**2015 - Honoree Doug Oberhelman at the National Press Club**



**2016 - Honoree Philip Anschutz at Anderson House**



**2017 - Honoree Robert "Bobby" Hitt III at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce**





## German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA®

Established in 1977, the German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA® (GAHF) is dedicated to preserving, educating, and promoting the cultural heritage of Americans of German-speaking ancestry. The foundation serves as the only national membership organization for German-Americans. Since 2010, we have been proudly presenting our rich heritage as the first national German-American Heritage Museum in our nation's capital.

We are committed to:

- Sharing a positive image of Americans of German-speaking heritage by focusing on their historical contributions to American society;
- Strengthening the ethnic awareness and diversity of German-Americans;
- Promoting the German language and culture; and
- Furthering German American relations, cooperation, and friendship.

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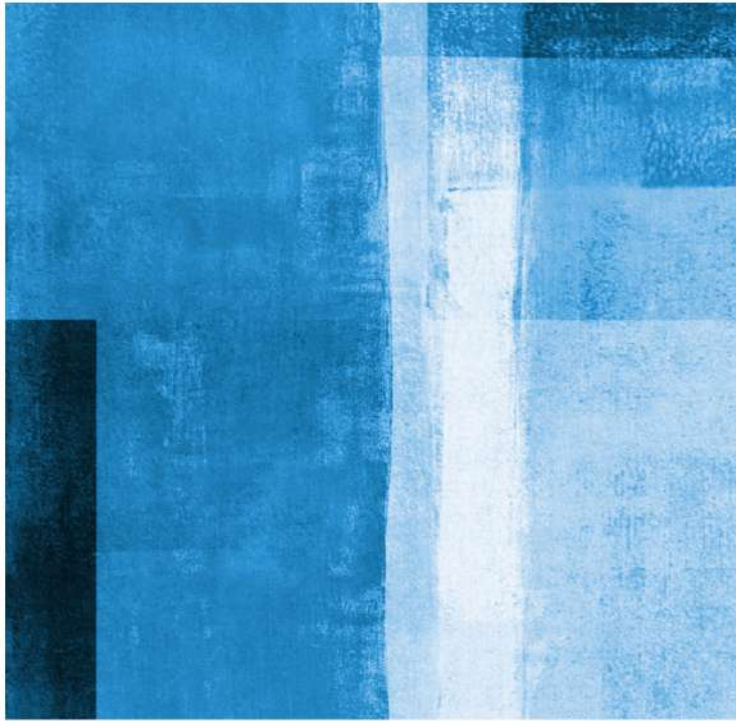
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*Honoring*

Peter Thiel

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We extend our best wishes and congratulations to  
**Mr. Peter Thiel**,  
the 2018 Distinguished  
German-American of the Year, and to the  
German-American Heritage Foundation.

Hardy von Auenmueller, President  
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Philadelphia, PA 19103



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## The German-American Heritage Museum™

The German-American Heritage Museum of the USA™ opened in March 2010, in a building once known as Hockemeyer Hall. Renovations were completed by the GAHF after acquiring the building in 2008. Located on 6th Street NW, in the heart of the old European-American section of Washington, the museum sits in what is now a thriving commercial neighborhood. The Heritage Museum's mission is to collect, record, preserve, and exhibit the rich cultural legacy of Americans of German-speaking ancestry, and make their contributions to American history available to audiences of all ages.