



- Good evening, Ambassador Rivkin, Mme la Ministre, ladies and gentlemen
- On behalf of the AmCham, I want to begin by thanking Ambassador Rivkin for providing the vision and the leadership behind The Washburne Award and for forging the coalition amongst our organizations to promote this outstanding program.
- We are honored to be part of the initiative since its inception, and delighted to see it grow and take roots in the Franco-American community. Looking ahead, we hope to build on our partnership to ensure its sustainability for the years to come.
- For the 120 years of the AmCham in France, we have worked to promote Franco-American collaboration on critical issues for business in society. The Washburne award for Innovation in Diversity exemplifies the shared values that unite our two countries and our societies across the Atlantic throughout centuries of cooperation: equality, openness and inclusion.
- But it is important to note that Innovation in Diversity is not only a deserving social cause, but also an economic imperative. For many of our companies, some who are candidates here today, social innovation is a core element of their business strategy and a lever of competitiveness. A company that does not reflect the community from which it draws its talent and its customers, will not withstand the challenges of the future.

- So we place social innovation at the heart of our mission at the AmCham – be it promoting diversity, youth outreach or women’s economic empowerment. By encouraging our companies to come together and share best practices, by showcasing the good work that they do, we aim to create a virtuous cycle of exchange, inspiration, and action

- So, thank you – again, to
 - Ambassador Rivkin and his team at the U.S. mission for making this possible,
 - to the French American Foundation that has worked by our side on this initiative,
 - to the jurors and stakeholders here this evening driving this mission,
 - and last but not least to the companies who are working on the ground, day by day, to contribute to their communities, they are all winners tonight, regardless of who receives the prize.