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## **ESA FOUNDER TAPPED FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD Lowenstein Follows Lincoln, Arakawa, and Kutaragi as Honorees**

**CALABASAS, Calif.** – November 10, 2009 – The Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences (AIAS) announced that Douglas Lowenstein, founder of the Entertainment Software Association (ESA), will be the third recipient of the Academy's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Lowenstein, currently President and CEO of the Private Equity Council, was tapped by leading video game publishers to launch the ESA (originally the Interactive Digital Software Association) in 1994. Over his 13 years as President, ESA grew into the most influential and important trade body representing the \$11.7 billion computer and video game software industry.

"Whether it was launching the E3 Expo and turning it into the signature gathering for interactive entertainment professionals, fighting against piracy, establishing the video game's influence in state capitals and Washington, DC, ceaselessly making the case that video games are as important a cultural force as other forms of entertainment, or rebutting virulent anti video game attacks, Doug's contributions to our industry and the creative community, have been profoundly meaningful and enduring," said Joseph Olin, president, AIAS.

"It was under Doug's leadership that the industry fought off dangerous efforts to impose restrictions on video game content, in the process establishing unequivocally that video games are entitled to the same First Amendment rights as any other entertainment content," said Jay Cohen, AIAS Board chair and president of development, Jerry Bruckheimer Games. "For those of us in the AIAS, it is no exaggeration to say that the artistic freedom we now enjoy stems directly from Doug's efforts."

"This Lifetime Achievement Award represents the greatest professional honor I have ever received and I am grateful beyond words to the AIAS," said Lowenstein. "To be honored for doing a job I loved, and fighting for values I deeply hold on behalf of an industry and people I felt privileged to represent, let alone to be in the company of Howard Lincoln, Minoru Arakawa, and Ken Kutaragi, is profoundly humbling."

Lowenstein became the first President of the Interactive Digital Software Association (now the Entertainment Software Association) in June, 1994 and helped the industry develop the capability to respond to congressional efforts to create a federal video game rating system. Later that year, the industry created the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) which became the gold standard entertainment rating system.

ESA faced its greatest challenge in the wake of the Columbine school massacre. With politicians and media blaming video games for the tragedy, as well as for subsequent school shootings in other states, the industry faced a wave of proposals at the federal and state level to regulate game sales and content. At one point, the ESA was fighting against bills in more than two dozen states, as well as in the Nation's Capital. While ESA won many of these battles, bills passed in nine states, leading ESA to mount a series of legal challenges striking down every one of the anti-video game measures and creating a body of case law and judicial precedents establishing that video games are a constitutionally protected form of expression.

In 1996, Lowenstein played an instrumental role in encouraging the ESA Board to create the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences to give the video game industry a peer driven organization to recognize and foster creative and artistic achievement in the game design world. He was a Founding Board member of the AIAS and remained committed to establishing its importance and credibility within the game industry.

Doug is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis (1973) and spent one year as a newspaper reporter, in Buffalo, NY and eight years as a Washington correspondent. From 1982-86 he served as a senior legislative aide to Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH). Lowenstein authored a biography of his late uncle, Allard K. Lowenstein, a member of Congress and anti-war, civil rights and human rights activist, who was killed in 1980, entitled "Lowenstein: Acts of Courage and Belief" Published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in 1982.

Prior to launching the ESA, Lowenstein worked at the Washington and New York strategic communications firm Robinson Lake Sawyer Miller, Inc, as executive vice president.

The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes the contributions outside of game-makers who had the belief and vision to build the interactive entertainment industry. Lowenstein joins prior inductees Howard Lincoln and Minoru Arakawa, founders of Nintendo of America and Ken Kutaragi, the father of PlayStation.

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