

THE PROGRESSIVE FORUM

Great Minds, Great Answers

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For Immediate Release

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Lester Brown, President of Earth Policy Institute, Appearing April 28.

The Progressive Forum, Houston, will present Lester Brown, president of Earth Policy Institute, Tuesday April 28, at the Wortham Center, Cullen Theater at 7:30 PM. He's the author of *Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing To Save Civilization* (Norton 2008) which will be on sale throughout the evening. He'll sign books and greet fans at the end of the evening. Tickets start at \$14 for orchestra level seats. Top tickets are \$74 and include a reception with Lester Brown, complimentary signed book, and center-front seats. Tickets are available at www.progressiveforumhouston.org or 832-251-0706. Physical box office sales are only at the theater on event night.

Lester Brown helped pioneer the concept of environmental sustainability by creating the first research institute in 1974 devoted to analyzing environmental issues on a global basis, Worldwatch Institute. He founded Earth Policy Institute in 2001 to provide modeling for sustainable economies.

Lester Brown has been described as "one of the world's most influential thinkers" by the *Washington Post*. The *Telegraph* of Calcutta called him "the guru of the environmental movement." The recipient of 24 honorary degrees, Brown has been honored with a MacArthur "genius" Fellowship, and the United Nations Environment Prize. In 1986, the Library of Congress requested his papers for its archives, noting that his writings "have already strongly affected thinking about problems of world population and resources. He's published 50 books which have been translated into over forty languages.

Lester Brown started his professional career as a farmer in southern New Jersey, his native state, when it was still the garden state. In 1958, he and his younger brother were marketing a million and a half pounds of tomatoes a year. After obtaining a degree in agricultural science from Rutgers in 1955, he spent six months living in rural India where he became familiar with food and population issues. Brown earned a masters degree in agricultural economics from the University of Maryland and in public administration from Harvard. In 1964, he became a foreign policy advisor to Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman, and two years later, administrator of the department's International Agricultural Development Service.

In 1974, he founded Worldwatch Institute, the first research institute devoted to analyzing environmental issues on a global basis. During his time there, he launched the World Watch paper series, the Worldwatch book series, *State of the World* reports, *World Watch* magazine, and *Vital Signs: The Trends That Are Shaping Our Future*.

The Progressive Forum is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(C)(3) civic speaker organization presenting five to seven events a year at The Wortham Center. It's the only civic speaker organization in the nation dedicated expressly to progressive values. Its purpose is to enrich our democracy and culture by striving to present the greatest minds from all the fields of human endeavor, the sciences and the humanities as well as politics and public affairs, great minds it believes are advancing the success of individuals, our species, and life on the earth.

This year of 2009 marks the fourth full season of The Progressive Forum. Past speakers include Al Gore who launched *An Inconvenient Truth* at The Progressive Forum, his first U.S. book event for that title. Others have included Robert F.

Kennedy, Jr. Jared Diamond, Seymour Hersh, Molly Ivins, George Soros, Edward O. Wilson, Frank Rich, Garrison Keillor, Joe Klein, Tim Flannery, Anna Deavere Smith, Gloria Steinem, James Hansen, Ken Burns, George Lakoff, Robert Redford, Bill McKibben, Elizabeth Edwards, Larry Wilmore, and T. Boone Pickens.

All Progressive Forum events are carbon neutral through a donation from DrivingGreen.com which offsets 51 tons of greenhouse gasses per event including the speaker's air and ground transportation, venue air conditioning and power, and audience driving to and from the theater.

The Progressive Forum originated a new model in the field of public affairs in Houston to deliver a higher quality experience to much larger audiences that typically attends speaking events. The Progressive Forum operates as a performing arts company by using the finest theaters, paying speaker fees to top intellectual stars, and marketing throughout the region. It offers convenient box office services through its website allowing ticket buyers to print tickets at their computer, in addition to traditional phone sales.

The Progressive Forum premiered on June 13, 2005, with Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Houston Mayor Bill White in a program called our "Environmental Challenges."

Founder and president, Randall R. Morton has owned Randall Morton International, Inc. for 33 years, an advertising and public relations agency whose clients have included leading oil equipment companies in the U.S., Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Morton created and hosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum, the largest speaker platform in the oil industry whose surplus went to Houston's SEARCH Homeless Project. While earning a degree in government from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee.

