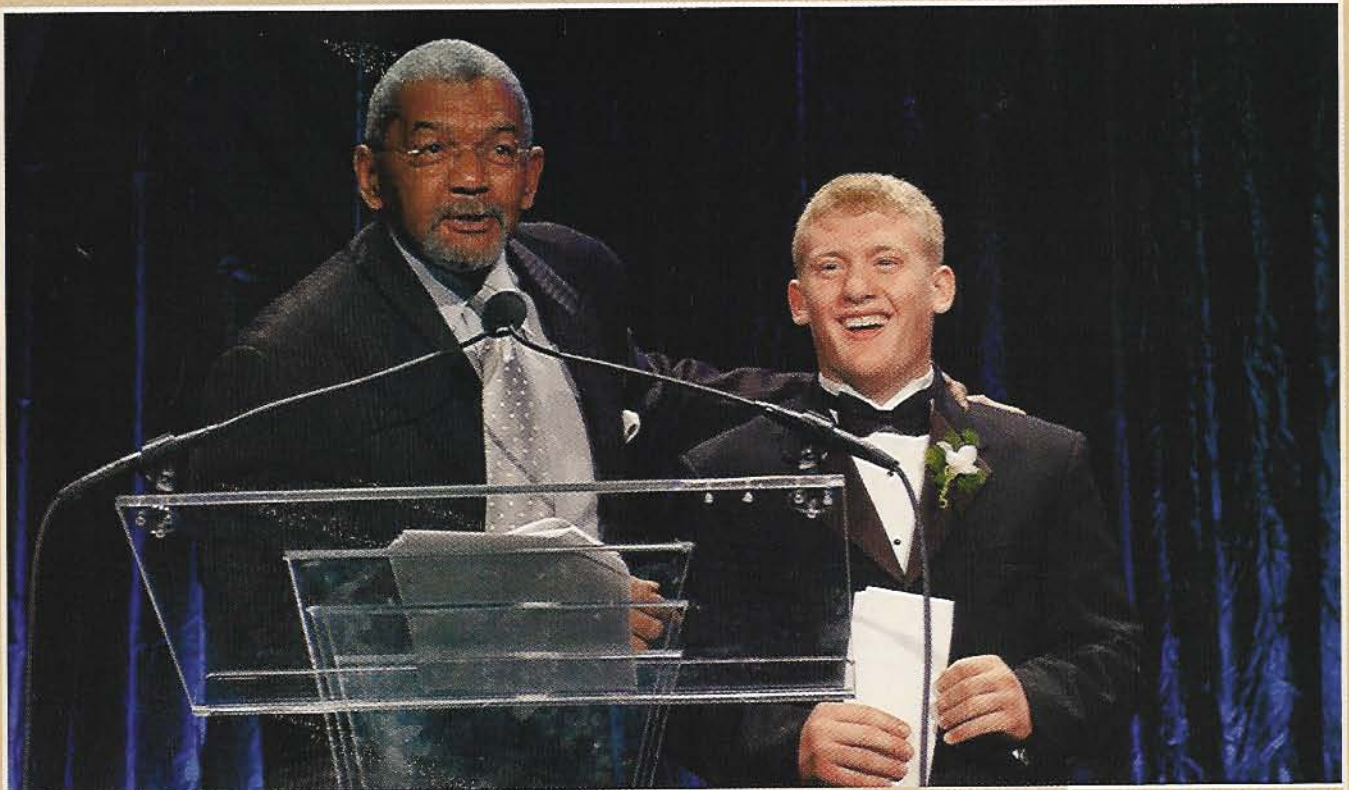


Business at Its Best

Five new laureates were inducted into the Business Hall of Fame, showcasing the city's economic strength and giving future business leaders a chance to shine



WRC-TV anchor Jim Vance, the emcee, with Fairfax High's Nick Simons, Junior Achievement's top entrepreneur. Simons hoped Steve Case would help him sign up AOL for his lawncare business.



Peppo's Beverly Perry; Gwen Ifill, moderator of *Washington Week*; and Linda Mathes, CEO of the area's American Red Cross.



CNN anchor Wolf Blitzer, who welcomed the 1,260 guests, with Steve Case, his wife, Jean, and son Everett.



Edward J. Grenier III, president and CEO of Junior Achievement, thanked the Board of Trade and *The Washingtonian*, cofounders of the Business Hall of Fame.



Former laureate James Kimsey, part of the Washington Baseball Club, led the salute to Washington's new baseball team.



Former Redskin Darrell Green delivered the invocation. He also talked about bringing baseball to DC and about being cut from a baseball team when he was a kid in Texas.



Real-estate mogul Joe Robert and WRC-TV general manager Michael Jack joined other business leaders at the 17th-annual Hall of Fame dinner at the Hilton Washington.



Tiera Douglas was one student from Anita J. Turner Elementary School in Southeast DC who escorted the laureates.



The 2004 laureates: Stephen M. Case, former chair and CEO of America Online; Marie C. Johns, former president and CEO of Verizon-Washington, DC; John M. Derrick Jr., retired chair of Pepco; P. Wesley Foster Jr., chair and CEO of Long & Foster; and Robert P. Pincus, longtime DC banker and chair of Milestone Merchant Partners.



Kyle Ahn, also known as Volcaz, paused during his rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" to say, "God, I love this country."



I. King Jordan, president of Gallaudet University, signed and spoke his introduction.



Washingtonian publisher Eleanor Merrill and Philip Merrill, head of the Export-Import Bank, congratulate honoree John Derrick.

Blitzer and Green photographs by Steve Purcell; Tiera Douglas by Mike Lymaugh; all others by Bill Fitz-Patrick