



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 7, 2009

Corporate Headquarters  
624 Brea Canyon Rd.  
Walnut, CA 91789  
P (909) 595-8599  
F (909) 595-8863  
[www.transtech.org](http://www.transtech.org)

**ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL OF HONOR AWARD**

WALNUT, CA -- Allen "Ali" Cayir, President of Transtech, will be awarded the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor in New York on May 9, 2009.



Established in 1986 by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO), the Ellis Island Medal of Honor pays tribute to our Nation's immigrant heritage, as well as individual achievement in fostering respect and understanding for America's ethnic diversity.

The creation of NECO was based on the conviction that diversity of American people is what makes this nation great. Its mission is to honor and preserve this diversity, and to foster tolerance, respect and understanding among religious and ethnic groups.

The Ellis Island Medals of Honor are awarded annually to distinguished individuals. A person meeting the criteria for the award exemplifies a life dedicated to community service, preserves and celebrates the history, traditions, and values of his/her ancestry group(s), builds bridges between ethnic, racial, and religious groups in the U.S. (and/or abroad), and shares his or her personal and professional gifts for the benefit of humanity.

Nominations from the public are the first step in the selection process. Any living U.S. citizen, native or naturalized, may be nominated for consideration for the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The final selection is made by NECO's Board of Directors.

The medals are awarded to U.S. citizens from various ethnic backgrounds who exemplify outstanding qualities in both their personal and professional lives while continuing to preserve the richness of their particular heritage.

Since NECO's founding in 1986, among the medal holders are several United States Senators, Congressmen, Nobel Laureates, outstanding athletes, artists, clergy and military leaders.

The Ellis Island Medals of Honor not only celebrate select individuals but also the pluralism and democracy that enabled our ancestors to celebrate their cultural identities while still embracing the American way of life.

A native of Turkey with an engineering degree from Istanbul Technical University, Ali Cayir arrived in New York in 1980 on his way to a new life in Southern California. During the early 1980's, Ali was employed at a public agency, and later held production and management positions with a large engineering firm.

In 1989, he founded Transtech, which provides professional and technical expertise to governmental agencies, educational institutions and the private development sector. His business savvy and dedicated approach to serving municipalities and the development industry has grown the company into a multi-million dollar enterprise. Ali is especially proud of the recently completed Alhambra Civic Center Public Library and receiving a notable Caltrans' Excellence Award for the Renovation and Adaptive Re-use of the Historic Santa Fe Depot Train Station in San Bernardino, CA.

Ali and Sybil, his wife of 31 years, and their civil engineering student daughter reside in Chino Hills. He is proud to be a Rotary Club member and a Paul Harris Fellow.

--

His philanthropic contributions and fund raising activities include: Tools for Education at California State University, San Bernardino (where a multi-cultural foundation lab is named after him), restoration work at Mission San Juan Capistrano, the Turkey Earthquake Relief Fund and other Turkish/American community causes, the United Way, as well as other numerous local charities and civic organizations.

Ali is also involved in Hispanic community organizations that provide support services to the Latino population. In 2006, ELLAS (Embracing Latino Leadership AllianceS) honored Ali as an "Honorary Latino Citizen." ELLAS is a non-profit organization committed to facilitating mentorship and leadership development opportunities to benefit Latina high school students, interested in pursuing higher education, traditional and non-traditional careers. Additional activities include supporting Proyecto Pastoral, a community organization helping needy children in East Los Angeles, supporting the Mexican American Legal Defense League Education Fund (MALDES), and supporting the White Memorial Hospital through the Corporate Hispanic Counsel Leadership Institute.

Ali is a volunteer teacher at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) and was selected by the school as the Teacher of the Year in 2005. He serves on the board of College of Education - Tools for Education Project, and was instrumental in raising \$3 million for a new education building at the University.

In 2005, after the Hurricane Katrina disaster, Ali started a matching fund-drive for local businesses for Katrina victims, and personally matched funds collected.

Ali donated start-up funds for the establishment of a Student Political Club at California State University, Pomona.

He is a founding Board Member of American Friends of Israel and Turkey (AFIT), an organization dedicated to improving cooperation and understanding between citizens of America, Turkey and Israel by supporting cultural, ethnic and community events.

He and Sybil chaired an event at Orange County Bowers Museum which raised enough funds for the education of Afghan girls in a North Afghanistan province.

He is a board member of the San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce, and the San Bernardino International Trade Commission Advisory Board, which is dedicated to improving commerce and trade relations between the San Bernardino Region and other countries.

Cayir participates in the American-Turkish Association of Southern California, and provides financial support to the organization's charity events including the building of an elementary school in Izmit after an earthquake.

In 2003, Ali and Sybil sponsored an elementary school in Bitlis, (Eastern Turkey) and provided equipment for the financially deprived school. They have also sponsored programs for Blinds Corps, a Turkish non-profit organization based in Nebraska providing assistance to visually challenged persons.

--

The award ceremony honoring Ali and others is held each May on Ellis Island. The event is expected to be full of pageantry, grandeur and emotion. All branches of the United States Armed Forces traditionally participate. Dancers in their native costumes will add to the international flavor of the celebration. A gala dinner in the historic Great Hall on Ellis Island will follow the moving ceremony. As a grand finale, a majestic fireworks display will illuminate the sky portraying America's symbol of freedom, the Statue of Liberty.

###