

MARTINDALE CENTER

FOR THE STUDY OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE



Ira W. Lieberman '64

**President, LIPAM International
Member of the Martindale Center Advisory Committee**

Ira has served on the advisory board of the Martindale Center for 17 years. He graduated Magna Cum Laude from Lehigh University in 1964. While at Lehigh, Ira attended El Colegio de Mexico during his junior year on scholarship. That experience led to a life-long career devoted to international business and subsequently economic aid and development. His son Aaron and daughter-in-law Jessica also graduated from Lehigh class of 94.

After Lehigh, Ira attended Columbia University and received an MBA in finance and accounting in 1966. Following Columbia, Ira worked in private business for some 18 years starting with Arthur Andersen's consulting division in New York. Ira then worked throughout Europe for Young & Rubicam as Financial and Media Systems Director in their Brussels headquarters. Thereafter, he managed Touche Ross' (now Deloitte & Touche) consulting group in their European headquarters based in Brussels. Returning to the U.S. in 1975, Ira worked for a privately held international trading and manufacturing group, ICC Industries Inc, as ICC's CFO and moved soon thereafter to Executive Vice President and President of ICC's manufacturing division. ICC traded chemicals, pharmaceutical raw materials, non-ferrous metals and synthetic fibers throughout the world with some 35 overseas offices. The firm also owned interests in several manufacturing companies in intermediate chemicals, flavors and fragrances, plastics and generic pharmaceuticals.

In 1982, Ira left ICC and moved to Oxford England with his family where he pursued a doctorate in international relations/ political economy at Oxford University. Returning to the U.S. in 1985, Ira and his family moved to Washington D.C. where he went to work for the World Bank. He worked for the World Bank in two stints over a 20-year period from 1985 to 1987 and from 1993 to 2004. Ira worked in several distinct areas for the World Bank – (i) he co-managed

privatization globally for the Bank with much of his work focused on the opening of Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union and their transition to market economies. He advised a number of countries on their privatization programs including, inter alia, Argentina, Poland, Russia, Albania, and Turkey; (ii) Ira started the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) and managed CGAP for five years from 1995 to 1999. CGAP served as the de-facto secretariat for the microfinance industry globally representing some 26 donor institutions and foundations; (iii) in 1999 Ira moved to the ECA region of the World Bank as a senior manager for private sector and financial sector development. His client countries were Russia, Central Asia and Serbia. He was subsequently appointed Senior Adviser (Deputy Director) ECA's Private and Financial Sector Department; and, (iv) Finally, Ira worked on financial and economic crises leading crisis resolution teams in Mexico (1994-1995), East Asia, primarily Korea (1997-1999), Turkey (2001-2002), and Argentina (2002-2003). During the most recent crisis, Ira worked for the IMF and the Troika in advising Portugal and Spain on crisis resolution during 2013 and 2015.

During his last year at the World Bank, prior to retirement, Ira was seconded to work for George Soros and the Open Society Institute (Soros Foundation) as senior economic adviser to George Soros and adviser to his foundation on their microfinance and small business program.

Since retirement as President and CEO of his own consulting firm, Ira has continued to advise emerging market and developing country governments, private firms and not for profits. His work in recent years has primarily focused on microfinance in Latin America and Africa.

Ira has served on the boards of directors of several publicly listed companies, privately held firms and not-for-profit institutions.

Ira has published widely in his areas of expertise—on privatization and the transition economies of Eastern and Central Europe and the FSU including a ten year retrospective on *Privatization in the Transition Economies* a book he co-edited; on crises with a recent book on crises, *In Good Times Prepare for Crisis*, published by Brookings Press; and on microfinance with a forth coming co-edited volume on the *Future of Microfinance* to be published by Brookings Press.