

February 2012

## **F. Francis Najafi Awarded Thunderbird Outstanding Alumnus Award**

F. Francis Najafi, CEO and founder of Phoenix-based Pivotal Group, was awarded the Jonas Mayer Outstanding Alumnus Award from Thunderbird School of Global Management.

This award is the highest honor bestowed on Thunderbird alumni who have demonstrated the ultimate in professional achievement, civic service and school engagement and support. Najafi is a 1977 graduate of the school and currently serves on Thunderbird's Board of Trustees. The award — originally established in 1952 as the American Business Enlightenment Award by Dr. Jonas H.



*F. Francis Najafi*

Mayer, Vice President of the American Linen Supply Company — recognizes those Thunderbird alumni whose work advances American business through extraordinary progress in the field of international trade.

“Francis Najafi epitomizes the ideals for which Thunderbird stands,” said Thunderbird President Ángel Cabrera, Ph.D. “We are honored to recognize Francis, whose contributions to Thunderbird and achievements as a global business leader affirm our belief that business can be a powerful source of economic prosperity and human development worldwide.”

With the help of Najafi's \$2 million personal gift to the school, Thunderbird School of Global Management launched the Najafi Global Mindset Institute this fall. The Najafi Global Mindset Institute is the first research center in the world to study the qualities that make international managers successful.

Earlier this year, Najafi received the Ellis Island Medal of Freedom from the National Ethnic Coalition for his outstanding citizenship, individual achievement and encouragement of cultural unity.

“I have been fortunate in my career and my life to be able to make positive contributions to the causes and organizations dear to me,” Najafi said. “It's an honor to be recognized by Thunderbird — the business school to which I owe so much.”

Founded more than a quarter century ago by CEO F. Francis Najafi, Pivotal Group is a diversified investment company primarily focused on private equity and real estate. For more information, visit [www.pivotal-group.com](http://www.pivotal-group.com).

Thunderbird is the world's No. 1-ranked school of international business with more than 60 years of experience in developing leaders with the global mindset, business skills and social responsibility necessary to create real, sustainable value for their organizations, communities and the world. For more information, visit [www.thunderbird.edu](http://www.thunderbird.edu). ❖