

## The 2012 Simon Award



*Leon Panetta*

Quoting a speech from Leon Panetta, “The reality is that we have to reflect the nation we live in and we have to reflect the world we are a part of. Languages are the key to understanding that world.”

Leon Edward Panetta was sworn in as the 23<sup>rd</sup> secretary of defense on July 1, 2011. Before joining the Department of Defense, Mr. Panetta served as the director of the Central Intelligence Agency from February 2009 to June 2011. Mr. Panetta led the agency and managed human intelligence and open source collection programs on behalf of the intelligence community.

Secretary Panetta has dedicated much of his life to public service. Before joining the CIA, he spent 10 years co-directing with his wife, Sylvia, at the Leon & Sylvia Panetta Institute for Public Policy, based at California State University, Monterey Bay. The Institute is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit center that seeks to instill in young men and women the virtues and values of public service.

Throughout his career – while in Congress, as director of the CIA and now as defense secretary -- Panetta has been a staunch advocate of foreign language training. “We live in a global world,” the secretary said. “We have to understand that world if we ... are going to be able to not only defend this country, but to extend our relationships to others so that we can work together to defend the world that we live in.”