



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**AGS Announces 2017 Circle of Distinction Honorees**

**Las Vegas, NV (March 6, 2017)** – The American Gem Society (AGS) announced today that it will honor three esteemed leaders in the jewelry industry at its annual Circle of Distinction dinner on Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at the historic Plaza Hotel in New York City. Dr. James Shigley, a distinguished research fellow at the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) in Carlsbad, CA, will receive the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award for his significant contributions to the industry throughout his career. Myriam Gumuchian, Co-Owner of Gumuchian, and Peter Engel, President of Fred Meyer Jewelers, will both be awarded the distinctive AGS Triple Zero™ Award for their many accomplishments and their dedication to the fine jewelry industry.

“The Circle of Distinction dinner is a proud tradition of the American Gem Society, honoring excellence and the outstanding contributions to our industry,” says Katherine Bodoh, CEO of AGS and AGS Laboratories. “This is my first Circle of Distinction dinner as CEO of the AGS, and I am truly honored and inspired by these three individuals who stand out as exceptional leaders in the fine jewelry industry.”

Dr. James Shigley joined GIA in 1982, where he helps direct their research activities on the identification of diamonds and colored gemstones. He has ongoing research interest in the natural geological environments of gem mineral formation as well as the characterization of gem materials. The author of more than 180 published articles, Dr. Shigley is a well-known speaker on gemological topics to both professional and general audiences.

Myriam Gumuchian created the Gumuchian brand in 1979 alongside her mother, Anita, and sister, Patricia. Gumuchian's “Designed by Women for Women” mantra sets out to capture the confidence and beauty of all women. Myriam's dedication and passion for the luxury jewelry industry has led her to serve on numerous industry boards, including the Jewelers Vigilance Committee (JVC), Women's Jewelry Association (WJA), COUTURE, Centurion, and the JA Trade Shows. In 2016, Myriam held the 24 Karat Club presidential position, becoming the second woman to hold the title.

Peter Engel joined Fred Meyer Jewelers in 1981 and is responsible for overseeing 319 stores in 31 states. Mr. Engel serves on the Board of Directors for Diamond Council of

America (DCA) and the Diamond Empowerment Fund (DEF). He is also a past Chairman of the Board of Jewelers for Children. Currently, he is actively involved with Jewelers of America (JA).

The Circle of Distinction event will begin at 6:00 p.m. with cocktails, followed by a three-course dinner and the awards presentation at 7:30 p.m. To order dinner tickets or to learn about advertising opportunities in the *Circle of Distinction Tribute Book*, contact Lauren Ruggeroli at 866-805-6500 x1005 or email [lruggeroli@ags.org](mailto:lruggeroli@ags.org).

To learn more about American Gem Society or its previous Circle of Distinction honorees, please visit [www.americangemsociety.org](http://www.americangemsociety.org).

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### **About the American Gem Society**

*The American Gem Society, founded in 1934 by Robert M. Shipley, is a nonprofit trade association dedicated to proven ethics, knowledge, and consumer protection within the jewelry industry. The American Gem Society is a professional organization awarding credentials for its members, who are held to the highest ethical and professional standards in the industry and must pass annual recertification examinations to maintain their titles. Less than one in twenty jewelers in the country have chosen to meet the exacting standards necessary for membership.*

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