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**EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION  
WINS 2006 AMERICAN EDUCATION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION  
OUTSTANDING BOOK AWARD**

NEW YORK, NY, April 10, 2006: The American Education Research Association announced yesterday that **EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION** by William G. Bowen, Martin A. Kurzweil and Eugene M. Tobin is the recipient of the prestigious 2006 Outstanding Book Award. The book was originally published in April 2005 by the University of Virginia Press and will be released in a paperback edition on April 30, 2006.

The book asserts that excellence at America's elite colleges is threatened by the failure to enroll more students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It proposes placing another "thumb on the scale" for students from low-income families as a complement to race-sensitive admissions.

The American Education Research Association is a professional society that has strengthened education through research since 1916. The award was presented to the authors on April 9<sup>th</sup> at the AERA's annual meeting. Accepting the award on behalf of all three authors, Martin Kurzweil stated that, "Improving the quality of American education and enhancing the openness of educational institutions to young people from all backgrounds will require creative policymaking, political will, and recognition of the important links between equity and excellence. Our book is just a gentle push down the path toward achieving this dual goal, but the Award gives us hope that it has generated some momentum."

Critical acclaim for the hardcover edition of **EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION** includes:

“In his new book, *Equity and Excellence in American Higher Education*, [Bowen] insists that there really is a substantial pool of low-income applicants who have what it takes to succeed at the nation’s most selective schools. [H]is data show they have great academic potential and that admissions officers aren’t doing what they could to give promising low-income kids an extra nudge in the process.”—*US News and World Report*

“The idea that the meritocracy isn’t working is gaining currency among observers of higher education. . . . The most prominent of [a number of recent] studies was headed by William Bowen. [In] *Equity and Excellence in American Higher Education*, Bowen and his co-authors use detailed data to argue that universities today are as much ‘bastions of privilege’ as they are ‘engines of opportunity.’”—*Atlantic*

**William G. Bowen**, former President of Princeton University and President of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is coauthor of *The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*, *The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values*, and *Reclaiming the Game: College Sports and Educational Values* among other works. **Martin A. Kurzweil** is Research Associate at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and a student at Harvard Law School. **Eugene M. Tobin**, former President of Hamilton College, is Program Officer for the Liberal Arts Colleges Program at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.