

THANKSGIVING CHARITY GALA DINNER



More information
can be found on:
www.amcham.sk

November 29 | 2024

Thanksgiving is more than just a holiday; it is a profound reminder of gratitude, community, and the power of togetherness. Its roots stretch back to 1621, when Pilgrims and Native Americans gathered to share a harvest feast, symbolizing a shared commitment to unity and mutual respect. Today, Thanksgiving has evolved into a cherished tradition of reflection, where we pause to express our thanks for life's blessings, both great and small. For AmCham Slovakia, the annual Thanksgiving Charity Gala Dinner is the embodiment of these core values. It is a time to come together, to celebrate the spirit of generosity, and to reflect on the positive impact our community continues to make.

This year's 28th Thanksgiving Charity Gala Dinner, held at the magnificent Bratislava Castle, was a grand celebration that captured the very essence of Thanksgiving. Guests, arriving in elegant and exquisite attire, set the tone for an unforgettable evening. The ladies, especially, shone brightly in their gowns, adding a touch

of glamour and grace to the event. The night began with a series of inspiring keynote speeches delivered by esteemed leaders. His Excellency Ambassador Gautam Rana, representing the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia, opened the evening with remarks on the importance of U.S.-Slovak relations. Following him was Christiana Serugová, Vice President of Finance and Chair of the AmCham Slovakia Board of Directors, whose speech highlighted the pivotal role AmCham has played over the last three decades.

Christiana's message was one of reflection and foresight. She took the audience on a journey through AmCham's 30-year legacy of fostering economic growth, promoting innovation, and advocating for a better business environment in Slovakia. However, she also urged the audience to look forward, reminding everyone that while the past has been significant, the future holds even greater promise. "The past 30 years were significant, but we must also focus on the megatrends shaping our future," she noted. The evening's theme, "Fly Me



to the Moon," symbolized this forward-looking vision, representing exploration, innovation, and limitless possibilities.

The night was also a moment to honor key figures in the AmCham community for their contributions. Katarína Miňová, Former Regional Manager of AmCham Slovakia, was recognized for her leadership in the "Mapping the Potential of Eastern Slovakia" initiative. Launched in 2023, this ambitious project identified six critical areas of the region's economy and engaged over 120 stakeholders to develop actionable solutions. The resulting position paper, which contained 18 key recommendations, has already produced tangible results, with several proposals now moving toward implementation.

The second AmCham Award of the evening went to Natália Spodniak for her role in orchestrating the Festival of Future in September. As the largest event in AmCham Slovakia's history, this festival, held to mark AmCham's 30th anniversary, served as a platform for innovation and forward-thinking. Over four days and six stages, participants explored themes ranging from digital transformation to healthcare, culminating in a vibrant celebration of AmCham's legacy and its future.

But the Thanksgiving Charity Gala Dinner is not just about recognition and reflection; it is also a night filled with joy, elegance, and entertainment. The program this year was especially memorable, beginning with a unique performance titled "Over the Moon," inspired by Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*. Musical performances by the talented Anabella and Martin Madej brought a lively energy to the room, captivating the audience and contributing to an atmosphere of celebration.

As the night progressed, the elegance of the gala gave way to an electric energy on the dancefloor.

Guests danced long into the night, with the dancefloor remaining packed most of the time. Another highlight of the evening was the highly anticipated raffle, where guests had the chance to win incredible prizes generously donated by AmCham's member companies. The excitement in the room was undeniable as guests eagerly awaited the announcement of the lucky winners. The raffle not only added a layer of excitement but also furthered the spirit of generosity that defines this event, as proceeds from the tickets supported the evening's charitable cause.

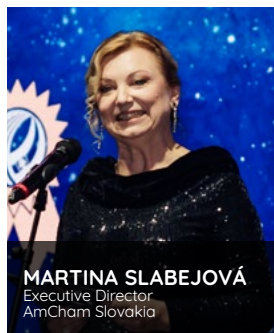
At its heart, the Thanksgiving Charity Gala Dinner is a celebration of generosity and compassion. Since its inception in 1998, this event has raised over 477,000 Euro, all of which has been directed toward charitable organizations that serve those most in need. Last year, through the extraordinary generosity of the AmCham community, we were able to brighten the lives of children at Minibodka, helping them experience the magic of Christmas. This year, our efforts focused on supporting Vstúpte, n.o., an innovative organization founded by parents in 2005. Vstúpte provides



H.E. GAUTAM RANA
US Ambassador to Slovakia

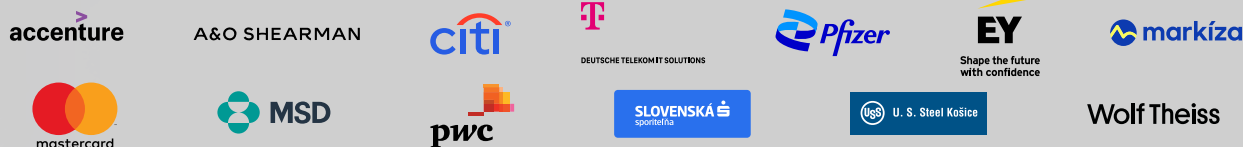


CHRISTIANA SERUGOVÁ
Vice President of Finance
AmCham Slovakia



MARTINA SLABEJOVÁ
Executive Director
AmCham Slovakia

GOLDEN PARTNERS



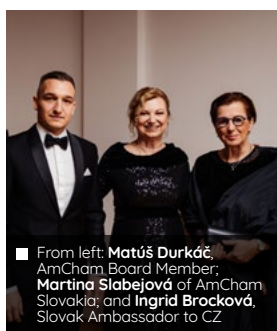
SILVER PARTNERS



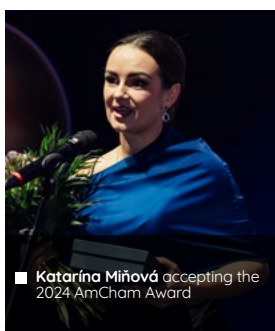
BRONZE PARTNERS



IN-KIND PARTNERS



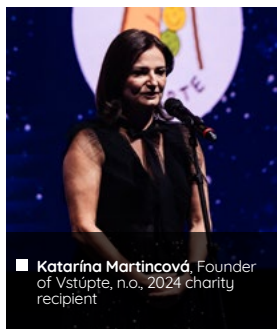
■ From left: **Matúš Durkáč**, AmCham Board Member; **Martina Slabejová** of AmCham Slovakia; and **Ingrid Brocková**, Slovak Ambassador to CZ



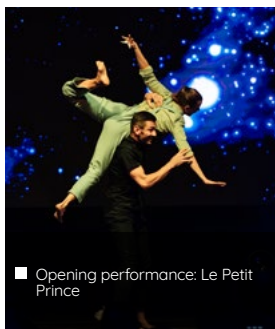
■ **Katarína Miňová** accepting the 2024 AmCham Award



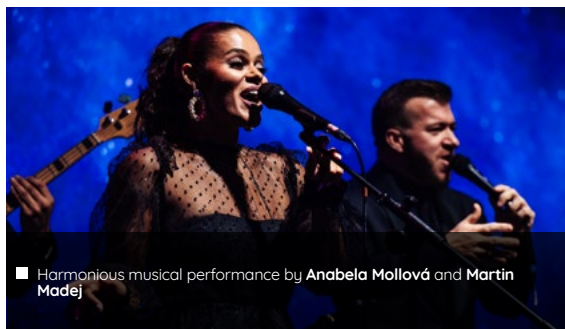
■ **Natalia Spodniak** accepting the 2024 AmCham Award



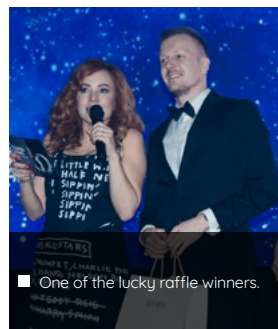
■ **Katarína Martincová**, Founder of Vstúpte, n.o., 2024 charity recipient



■ Opening performance: Le Petit Prince



■ Harmonious musical performance by **Anabela Mollová** and **Martin Madej**



■ One of the lucky raffle winners.

essential social services for individuals with intellectual and multiple disabilities, offering programs that focus on employment, social integration, cultural engagement, and therapeutic care.

The organization's personalized approach ensures that each individual's unique needs are met, helping them grow and thrive. By providing not only care for individuals with disabilities but also critical support for their families, Vstúpte has become a lifeline for many. This year, through the generosity of our guests, we raised an astounding 16,500 Euro to support Vstúpte's programs, ensuring that they can continue to offer life-changing services to those who need them most.

As we look ahead, the message of unity, collaboration, and ambition that was celebrated at this year's Gala is more relevant than ever. Just as the theme of the evening—Fly Me to the Moon—suggests, aiming high and dreaming big are key to unlocking the future's potential. Whether through fostering economic growth, supporting innovation, or working together to support those in need, the AmCham community has consistently proven that by working together, we can achieve extraordinary things.

We are deeply grateful to have celebrated this message of unity and ambition with our AmCham members on this special Thanksgiving Night. Together, we can reach for the stars!

