

Cynthia P. Schneider  
Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy  
Georgetown University and Brookings Institution  
[cpschneider@restructassoc.com](mailto:cpschneider@restructassoc.com), +3017069260

Ambassador Cynthia P. Schneider  
Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy  
Georgetown University and Brookings Institution  
[cpschneider@restructassoc.com](mailto:cpschneider@restructassoc.com), +3017069260

### **Favorite Poem Book, DVD, and Website in Arabic and English**

**Project Leaders:** Cynthia P. Schneider and Robert Pinsky, former Poet Laureate  
(<http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/200>)

#### **Concept:**

Develop an Arabic counterpart to former Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky's *Favorite Poem* project (<http://www.favoritepoem.org/>) in which Pinsky invited Americans to send him their favorite poem by any author with an explanation of why he or she had chosen it. Pinsky was flooded with submissions, out of which came the following: three anthologies of selected poems with the brief texts explaining the significance of the poem to the person who selected it; a website where all the submissions can be accessed; a DVD with selected individuals reciting and discussing "their" poems. Textbook editions and teacher's materials are available as well.

Ambassador Cynthia Schneider and Robert Pinsky propose to work with a well known poet from the Arab world, who would solicit "favorite poems" from the Arabic speaking public. The English-Arabic *Favorite Poem Project* would then publish a book with selections of the English language favorite poems translated into Arabic, and selections of the Arabic language favorite poems translated into English. The book would be marketed/distributed to both Arabic and English audiences. In addition, the Project would develop a dual language website where the poems could be accessed. With additional funding, the Project also could produce a DVD with people reciting and discussing "their" poems in English with Arab subtitles, and in Arabic with English subtitles. Poetry is revered in the Arab world by people of all ages, and Robert Pinsky's project demonstrated that it is also very significant to Americans. This book and website would give the English speaking world a window into a key component of Arabic culture and what it means today, and would introduce the poetry and the people of America to the Arabic speaking world.

**Outcomes:** The first dual language English-Arabic volume of poetry and website. The book and website would introduce to the English speaking public the poetry of the Arab world, as well as the voices of the people who love it, and it would similarly open up poetry in English as well as what it means to people from all walks of life to the Arab world. The DVD would present the poetry and its public from different cultures and languages to each other. It could be marketed to television stations in the U.S. and in the Middle East.