

# MOLLY MELCHING



**Molly Melching** has studied, lived, and worked in Senegal since 1974 and founded the international NGO, Tostan, in 1991. Tostan implements an innovative and holistic, three-year empowering education program that has engaged over 3,000 rural African communities in themes of democracy, human rights, health, literacy, and economic empowerment. The program has led to over 20,000 rural women taking on leadership posts and over 9,000 communities in eight African countries publicly declaring their commitment to promote well-being by abandoning harmful traditional practices.

Molly and Tostan have received international recognition for their successful work from, among others: the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize, the Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship, the Thomas J. Dodd Prize in International Justice and Human Rights, the Anna Lindh Human Rights Award and UNESCO's King Sejong Literacy Prize. A New York Times best-selling book by Aimee Molloy *However Long the Night*, vividly relates Molly and Tostan's story. They are also featured in Melinda French Gates's book, *Moment of Lift* and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton's, *The Book of Gutsy Women*. Molly also received the title of "Chevalière de l'Ordre National du Lion" (Knight of the National Order of the Lion), one the highest distinctions awarded by the Government of Senegal.

