In a development that barely could have been envisioned by the authors of the Freedom of Information Act four decades ago, and with a force that has been accelerating around the globe, people in more than 90 nations of the world now enjoy the benefits of “government transparency” laws akin to the FOIA. In the United States, “Freedom of Information Day” is celebrated each year on or near March 16 (the birthday of James Madison) and now since 2002, members of the international transparency community around the world likewise have celebrated “International Right-to-Know Day” annually on or near September 28, a day marking their progress and unity of purpose.

Since its establishment in the fall of 2007, the Collaboration on Government Secrecy has become the principal location for the celebration of International Right-to-Know Day in the United States, which has become all the more significant in light of the U.S.’s restored role as a leader and model for further transparency development worldwide. This year, for its seventh annual celebration of International Right-to-Know Day, CGS will present its annual survey of recent developments in transparency worldwide, including those of the Open Government Partnership, together with a live video link to an IRTKD celebration in Sofia, Bulgaria, where the idea for it was born. This year’s keynote presentation will be made by Professor Suzanne J. Piotrowski, founder of the International Transparency and Secrecy Research Network at Rutgers University.