

President Obama honors nation's top scientists and innovators

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The National Medal of Science was first presented 50 years ago by President John F. Kennedy. Credit: NSF

President Obama today announced a new group of recipients of the National Medal of Science and National Medal of Technology and Innovation—the nation's highest honors for achievement and leadership in advancing the fields of science and technology. The honorees will receive their medals at a White House ceremony later this year.

"These scholars and innovators have expanded our understanding of the world, made invaluable contributions to their fields, and helped improve countless lives," President Obama said. "Our nation has been enriched by their achievements, and by all the scientists and technologists across

America dedicated to discovery, inquiry, and invention."

Awarded annually, the Medal recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to science and engineering. The President receives nominations from a committee of presidential appointees based on their extraordinary knowledge of and contributions to chemistry, engineering, computing, mathematics, and the biological, behavioral/social, and [physical sciences](#).

The National Medal of Technology and Innovation was created by statute in 1980 and is administered for the White House by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Patent and Trademark Office. The award recognizes those who have made lasting contributions to America's competitiveness and quality of life and helped strengthen the nation's technological workforce. A distinguished independent committee representing the private and public sectors submits recommendations to the President.

Among this year's 10 recipients of the National Medal of Science, nine received NSF support at some point in their research careers, for a cumulative total of more than \$35 million.

Administered for the White House by the National Science Foundation, the National Medal of Science was established by the 86th Congress in 1959 as a presidential award to be given to individuals "deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding contributions to knowledge in the physical, biological, mathematical or engineering sciences." In 1980 Congress expanded this recognition to include the social and behavioral sciences.

A committee of 12 scientists and engineers is appointed by the president to evaluate the nominees for the award. Since its establishment, the National Medal of Science has been awarded to 487 distinguished

scientists and engineers whose careers spanned decades of research and development. The recipients database, with information from 1962 to the present, is searchable by name, affiliation and other criteria.

The names, affiliations, and short biographies of this year's National Medal of Science Laureates follow:

Bruce Alberts, University of California, San Francisco

Bruce Alberts is an internationally-renowned biochemist and Professor Emeritus at the University of California, San Francisco. In addition to his research in the field of DNA replication, he is an avid proponent of improving science and mathematics education and international scientific cooperation.

Robert Axelrod, University of Michigan

Robert Axelrod is renowned for his work on the evolution of cooperation and its application across disciplines, from the social sciences to biology and computer [science](#). He is a professor in the Department of Political Science and the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan.

May Berenbaum, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

May Berenbaum's pioneering studies of insect-plant co-evolution and her extensive public engagement have made her a world-renowned expert on all insect-related matters. Dr. Berenbaum is Professor and Head of the Department of Entomology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Alexandre J. Chorin, University of California, Berkeley

Alexandre Chorin is an applied mathematician known for his contributions to computational fluid mechanics. He is a professor of mathematics at the University of California, Berkeley, and a senior scientist at the U.S. Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

Thomas Kailath, Stanford University

Thomas Kailath is an electrical engineer known for his contributions to the information and system sciences. He is currently the Hitachi America Professorship of Engineering, Emeritus at Stanford University.

Judith P. Klinman, University of California, Berkeley

Judith Klinman is a physical-organic chemist renowned for her work on enzymes. She is currently a professor of chemistry and of molecular and cell biology at the University of California, Berkeley.

Jerrold Meinwald, Cornell University

Jerrold Meinwald is considered one of the fathers of chemical ecology. He is currently the Goldwin Smith Professor of Chemistry Emeritus at Cornell University.

Burton Richter, SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory and Stanford University

Burton Richter is a Nobel Prize-winning physicist known for co-discovering the J/Psi meson. He is the Paul Pigott Professor in the Physical Sciences at Stanford University.

Sean C. Solomon, Columbia University

Geophysicist Sean Solomon is director of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University, where he is also the William B. Ransford Professor of Earth and Planetary Science.

And a posthumous Medal to:

David Blackwell, University of California, Berkeley

David Blackwell (1919-2010) was a towering figure in the fields of probability, statistics, and the mathematical sciences. He was a professor emeritus of mathematics and statistics at the University of California, Berkeley.

National Medal of Technology and Innovation awardees:

Charles W. Bachman, Mass.

Edith M. Flanigen, UOP, LLC., a Honeywell Company, N.Y.

Eli Harari, SanDisk Corporation, Calif.

Thomas Fogarty, Fogarty Institute for Innovation, Calif.

Arthur D. Levinson, Calico, Calif.

Cherry A. Murray, Harvard University School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Mary Shaw, Carnegie Mellon University

Douglas Lowy and John Schiller, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health

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