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Finalists Named in the New York Academy of Sciences' 2010 Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists Competition

Twelve tri-state area scientists receive unrestricted funds for impactful, innovative, and interdisciplinary research.

A dozen outstanding scientists from eight New York-area academic and research institutions have been named the finalists of the 2010 New York Academy of Sciences Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists.

The five postdoctoral fellows and seven faculty were selected from among more than 150 nominations by a jury of 58 leading scientists after two rounds of reviews. Faculty finalists will receive up to \$25,000 in unrestricted funds, and postdoctoral finalists will receive up to \$15,000 in unrestricted funds.

The finalists work in a wide variety of scientific disciplines. Those in faculty positions conduct research in the fields of astrophysics, biochemistry, earth sciences, engineering, and neurosciences. Postdoctoral fellow finalists are pursuing work in the areas of behavioral sciences, cell biology, computer sciences, nanotechnology, and structural biology.

Winners will be announced and all finalists honored at the Academy's 7th annual Science and the City Gala, on November 15, 2010.

Now in its fourth year, the Blavatnik Awards recognize highly innovative, impactful, and interdisciplinary accomplishments in the life sciences, physical sciences, and engineering with unrestricted financial prizes for both finalists and awardees.

The finalists are:

Faculty

- Elza Erkip, Polytechnic Institute of New York University, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- David Evans, Yale University, Department of Geology and Geophysics
- Zoltan Haiman, Columbia University, Department of Astronomy
- Michal Lipson, Cornell University, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Evgeny Nudler, New York University, Department of Biochemistry
- Shonghai Shi, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Institute, Department of Developmental Biology
- Neal Weiner, New York University, Department of Physics

Postdoctoral Fellows

- Yaron Lipman, Princeton University, Department of Applied and Computational Mathematics

- Haitoa Liu, Columbia University, Department of Chemistry
- Nicolas Reyes, Weill Cornell Medical Center, Department of Physiology and Biophysics
- Daniela Schiller, New York University, Department of Psychology
- Agnel Sfeir, The Rockefeller University, Laboratory for Cell Biology and Genetics

“For the fourth year, The New York Academy of Sciences is proud to recognize the most accomplished young scientists who are working to advance science and technology in the world’s greatest cluster of universities and academic medical centers,” said Academy President Ellis Rubinstein in announcing the finalists.

“The generosity and prescience of the [Blavatnik Family Foundation](#) in recognizing the concentration of talent in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, and then establishing an annual prize to highlight that talent in every field of science and technology, is already being confirmed. One of the first NYAS Blavatnik Young Scientist awardees – Ruslan Medzhitov – was elected to the prestigious National Academy of Sciences this year. This is only one demonstration of the importance of the science emerging from New York area laboratories today.”

“Encouraging and supporting young scientists is critical if we are to successfully address society’s challenges,” said [Len Blavatnik, chairman of Access Industries](#). “Unlike awards that honor scientists late in their careers, The Blavatnik Awards are designed to recognize and reward promising young scientists early in their careers when they need it most. These brilliant young scientists represent our future and our hope for a better world for all.”

The Blavatnik Awards were created in 2007 to acknowledge the excellence of the most noteworthy young scientists and engineers in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Up to six awards are presented for interdisciplinary accomplishments in the life sciences, physical sciences, and engineering.

In addition to performing the highest quality work, 2010 candidates must have been born on or after January 1, 1968.

About the New York Academy of Sciences

The New York Academy of Sciences is an independent, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing science, technology, and society worldwide since 1817. With close to 24,000 members in 140 countries, NYAS is creating a global community of science for the benefit of humanity. NYAS’ core mission is to advance scientific knowledge, positively impact the major global challenges of society with science-based solutions, and increase the number of scientifically informed individuals in society at large. (www.nyas.org).

About Access Industries

Access Industries is a privately held, U.S.-based industrial group with long-term holdings worldwide. Access was founded in 1986 by its Chairman, Len Blavatnik, an American industrialist and philanthropist. Access’ industrial focus spans three key sectors: natural resources and chemicals, telecommunications and media, and real estate. (www.accessindustries.com).