



NEW YORK, November 1, 2011

The New York Academy of Sciences Introduces Translational Science Initiative, Announces Winners of 2011 Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists

More than 450 global leaders in science, medicine, government, industry, and academia gathered at the New York Academy of Sciences 8th Annual Science & The City Gala at Cipriani 42nd Street in New York City. Convened to honor those who have made significant contributions to science and the Academy's initiatives, the event raised \$1.8 million for the Academy's programs.

After an introduction from Academy Chair Nancy L. Zimpher, chancellor, the State University of New York, the Academy honored John E. Sexton, president, New York University, and former chair of the Academy, for his long-time support of and extraordinary contributions to the Academy.

Academy President and CEO Ellis Rubinstein then unveiled the Academy's Translational Science Initiative, which aims to accelerate the transfer of basic scientific discoveries into new methods for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease. The initiative will intersect the Academy's signature programs, including multidisciplinary conferences and workshops, public advocacy events, academic and lay publications, career mentoring, and working groups.

The first of the Academy's translational science "modules" or discreet projects is a partnership with One Mind for Research, a coalition of researchers and advocates dedicated to improving the understanding and treatment of brain disorders, with support from Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, IBM, AstraZeneca, and Sanofi. By connecting scientists and clinicians across disciplines and sectors, the Academy and One Mind for Research will work to foster the translation of scientific discoveries into therapeutics for Alzheimer's disease and other neurological conditions. In recognition of this partnership, One Mind for Research and its co-founders and co-chairs, Garen K. Staglin and Former U.S. Representative Patrick Kennedy, were honored at the Gala. Rep. Kennedy addressed Gala attendees.

"We are so excited to introduce our new Translational Science Initiative, and we find it to be especially appropriate as we honor our dear friend and colleague, outgoing board chair John Sexton," said Chancellor Zimpher. "This initiative, in partnership with One Mind for Research, exemplifies the kind of power and innovation the Academy brings to science and research in New York and around the world—and also speaks to the dedicated and selfless leadership John has demonstrated, which I will strive to carry on in his place."

The Academy also recognized the scientific contributions of the finalists of the 2011 Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists and announced this year's four winners.

Established in 2007 by the Blavatnik Family Foundation, this awards program recognizes researchers who make innovative, impactful, and interdisciplinary advances in the life and physical sciences, mathematics, and engineering. "The concept of the awards is unique: to choose the best and brightest in a competition that bridges more than 30 scientific disciplines from the natural sciences to engineering and math" said Rubinstein.

Out of approximately 150 high-caliber applications, 60 judges named seven faculty and six postdoctoral fellows as finalists. All finalists receive unrestricted cash prizes.

The 2011 faculty finalists are:

- Robert Anderson, City College of CUNY, Ecology,
- Johannes Gehrke, Cornell University, Computer Science,
- Charalampos Kalodimos, Rutgers University, Chemistry,
- Jun Korenaga, Yale University, Earth Sciences,
- Szabolcs Marka, Columbia University, Astronomy, Astrophysics & Cosmology,
- Olga Troyanskaya, Princeton University, Computational Biology, and
- Gerard Wysocki, Princeton University, Engineering.

The 2011 postdoctoral finalists are:

- Roberto Bonasio, New York University, Biochemistry,
- Mary Kay Lobo, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Neuroscience,
- Shaun Olsen, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Structural Biology,
- Franck Oury, Columbia University, Physiology,
- Valentino Tosatti, Columbia University, Mathematics, and
- Ruth Van de Water Brookhaven National Laboratory, Nuclear & Particle Physics.

Of the finalists, Gehrke, Marka, Oury, and Tosatti were named winners. "Basic science and human explorations are the true frontiers for today's adventurer. The Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists enables bold adventures of the future to benefit all," said Marka.

The four winners and nine finalists were introduced by Len Blavatnik, founder and chairman, Access Industries; Michal Lipson, associate professor, Kavli Institute at Cornell, and 2010 Blavatnik Award faculty winner; and Ben Oppenheimer, associate curator and professor, American Museum of Natural History and 2009 Blavatnik Award faculty winner. Said Gehrke upon receiving his award, "I am very humbled and thrilled to be named a winner in the 2011 Blavatnik awards program. Research on large data has a huge impact on the world now, and I am honored that with this prize I have the opportunity to show to a broader audience how it influences science, health care, education, energy, and the environment."

Nominations for the 2012 Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists will be accepted from December 1, 2011, to January 31, 2012. To nominate a researcher or for more information about the Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists, please visit www.nyas.org/blavatnikawards or contact Awards Coordinator Marley Bauce at mbauce@nyas.org.

The 2011 Gala was underwritten by the Blavatnik Family Foundation and Jim & Marilyn Simons, with additional funding from a host of generous corporate and personal supporters.

About The Blavatnik Family Foundation

The Blavatnik Family Foundation is an active supporter of educational, scientific, cultural, and charitable institutions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, and throughout the world. Recipients of Foundation support include, among others, Oxford University, Harvard University, Tel Aviv University, Tate, The Royal Opera House, The Hermitage, The National Portrait Gallery, The British Museum, The National Gallery of Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The New York Academy of Sciences, The White Nights Foundation, The Center for Jewish History and other Jewish causes as well as many other philanthropic institutions. The Foundation is headed by Len Blavatnik, an American industrialist. Mr. Blavatnik is the founder and Chairman of Access Industries, a privately-held U.S. industrial group with global interests in natural resources and chemicals, media and telecommunications, and real estate.

About One Mind for Research

One Mind for Research brings together the science, technology, financial resources and, knowledge required to create an unprecedented understanding of brain disease. One Mind for Research's plan to work smarter and share resources through public and private partnerships has the power to help us make more progress on every brain disorder from schizophrenia to traumatic brain injury. In the process, we will increase the investment in research by \$1.5 billion each year for the next 10 years, and achieve a minimum 10% reduction in the cost of brain disease per year. This is how neurological cures that once seemed beyond our reach begin to take shape. For more information, please visit <http://1mind4research.org>.

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 25,000 members in 140 countries, the Academy is creating a global community of science for the benefit of humanity. The Academy's 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. Visit www.nyas.org for more information on the Academy.

CONTACT:

Diana Friedman

(212) 298-8645

dfriedman@nyas.org