



ASTC Announces 2014 Roy L. Shafer Leading Edge Award Recipients

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Two ASTC-member science museums and three science center professionals were named 2014 Roy L. Shafer Leading Edge Award recipients earlier today by the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), during ASTC's Annual Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. Presented annually, the awards recognize extraordinary accomplishments in Business Practice, Visitor Experience, and Leadership in the Field during the last three years. Now in their 10th year, the "Edgies" commemorate the late Roy L. Shafer, a former science center director, ASTC president, organizational coach, and mentor to many in the science center field.

The 11-member Leading Edge Award jury chose to honor the **Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, Illinois**, with the award for Visitor Experience for *Future Energy Chicago*, a unique, participatory experience designed to deepen guests' understanding of how energy works in the real world. The centerpiece is a multi-player simulation game in which teams collaborate and compete to create an energy-efficient future for the city of Chicago. *Future Energy Chicago* is centered on the social experience; engaging, inspiring, and sparking dialogue amongst users while reflecting the idea that addressing our energy challenges requires our collective effort.

A second Leading Edge Award in the Visitor Experience category was presented to **Heureka, the Finnish Science Centre, Vantaa** for *Heureka Goes Crazy*, the first interactive science centre exhibition about mental health. The exhibition aims to decrease the stigma connected to mental health problems and to encourage visitors to take care of their own mental health. It was developed together with scientists and professionals, as well as with peer experts. The approach is multidisciplinary, and art has been widely used as a means to offer multiple entry points to the topic. The marketing campaign, where Heureka's own staff pose with the "crazy goggles," adds another layer to the experience, dealing with a taboo topic in an encouraging way.

For the first time this year, Leading Edge Awards for Experienced Leadership in the Field were presented to individuals not holding a CEO position, as well as a science center CEO. The first non-CEO award was presented to **Dr. Judy Brown, senior vice president, education, Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science, Miami, Florida**, who has made major contributions to the field through development and evaluation of innovative educational programming, and plays a leadership role nationally in bringing resources of the informal science education community to the K-12 educational reform movement. Her recent work in gender equity in STEM builds on her 25 years at the Museum, where she has built a continually evolving education department focused on in-depth, multi-year programming that strengthens the workforce by providing equitable access to new technologies, implementing strategies to engage girls in STEM, developing early childhood science curriculum, and building capacity of informal and formal educators.

The second award in this category was presented to **Eric Siegel, director and chief content officer, New York Hall of Science, Queens**, a former president of the National Association of Museum Exhibitions who is on the graduate faculty at New York University in the Museum Studies and ITP program. He has developed exhibitions and programs like *Human +* and *False Conviction* that connect science to humanitarian social goals. He leads a large and diverse team of

researchers, designers, and educators to create large-scale exhibition and digital experiences. He also has led the integration of the maker movement with the ISE community, and published and spoken widely on a broad range of ISE topics.

Erik Jacquemyn, chief executive officer, Technopolis, the Flemish Science Centre, Mechelen, Belgium, received the Experienced Leadership in the Field Award for CEOs. Jacquemyn brought the international science centre field together in the high-level Science Centre World Summit 2014, an achievement of global impact, held in March 2014. While the long term effects of the World Summit will be measured in the next three years, some outcomes are already known that point to the impact of his leadership in engaging the world science centre organizations and his staff and volunteers to bring this new vision of a world meeting to fruition. In total, 464 participants—no less than 38 percent came from outside the science centre field—attended the Summit, bringing together the leadership of the science centre field with leaders of international science and governmental organizations, scientists, astronauts, Nobel laureates, even the King of Belgium. Jacquemyn has been called a leader with a sense of perfection, a person who is passionate and creative and committed to advance the field globally.

This year's Leading Edge Award jury was chaired by **Jan Luth**, Exploration Place, Wichita, Kansas, and its members included: **Jonah Cohen**, The Children's Museum, West Hartford, Connecticut; **Chris Cropper**, Maryland Science Center, Baltimore; **Maribel Garcia**, The Mind Museum, Manila, Philippines; **Asger Høeg**, Experimentarium, Hellerup, Denmark; **Erica Lacey**, Kirby Science Discovery Center, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; **Steve Langsdorf**, Roto, Dublin, Ohio; **Rae Ostman**, formerly with Royal Ontario Museum; **Whitney Owens**, Great Lakes Science Center, Cleveland, Ohio; **Harry White**, At-Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom; and **Nikole Williams**, EdVenture Children's Museum, Columbia, South Carolina.

About ASTC

The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) is a global organization providing collective voice, professional support, and programming opportunities for science centers, museums, and related institutions, whose innovative approaches to science learning inspire people of all ages about the wonders and the meaning of science in their lives. Through strategic alliances and global partnerships, ASTC strives to increase awareness of the valuable contributions its members make to their communities and the field of informal STEM learning. Founded in 1973, ASTC now represents over 650 members in nearly 50 countries, including not only science centers and museums, but also nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, botanical gardens, and natural history and children's museums, as well as companies, consultants, and other organizations that share an interest in informal science education. For more information about ASTC, or to find a science center near you, visit www.astc.org.

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