



ASTC Announces 2013 Roy L. Shafer Leading Edge Award Recipients

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 8, 2013

CONTACT: Larry Hoffer
(202) 783-7200 x114
lhoffer@astc.org

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Two ASTC-member science museums and one science center professional were named 2013 Roy L. Shafer Leading Edge Award recipients earlier today by the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC). Presented annually, the awards recognize extraordinary accomplishments in Business Practice, Visitor Experience, and Leadership in the Field during the last three years. Now in its ninth 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 winners receive a complimentary registration to the 2013 ASTC Annual Conference, October 19-22 in Albuquerque, NM. Their Edgies—the etched glass awards—will be presented during the Leadership and Awards Luncheon on Saturday, October 19, at the Albuquerque Convention Center.

The 10-member Leading Edge jury chose to honor **Sciencenter**, Ithaca, New York, in the Business Practice category, for *MuseumTools.org: A High-Impact HR Toolkit for Science Museums*. Nearly four dozen human resource management tools comprise the toolkit, and its documents, templates, and survey instruments are accessible 24-7, free to download, and easy to customize. The tools cover six major areas, with half dedicated to the core process of hiring and on-boarding new staff. The final three sections cover job performance and work environment assessment, planning and evaluation, including the center's leadership succession plan, and best practices to follow in collaborative projects. The jury praised not only the quality and quantity of human resource documents and staff feedback instruments, but also Sciencenter's willingness to share these resources with science centers worldwide.

The recipient of the Leading Edge Award for Visitor Experience is **Science Alive! The New Zealand Science Centre**, Christchurch, for *A Science Centre without Walls*. In 2010 and 2011 a series of devastating earthquakes destroyed more than 10,000 buildings in Christchurch, including the former train station that housed Science Alive. Within a few weeks of the most significant earthquake, Science Alive staffers were running science activity booths at local farmers markets, and converting existing classes into portable formats and creating new workshops, then taking these programs on the road to schools, preschools, libraries, and youth justice centers. The most popular event, the *Under 5 Fest*, provided exhibits and activities for preschoolers—including those too young to visit the original science centre—over a 10-day period. The jury found the focus on fostering a love of science in a new generation to be especially commendable.

Asger Høeg, executive director of Experimentarium in Hellerup, Denmark, is the recipient of the 2013 Leading Edge Award for Experienced Leadership in the Field. Although quite the seasoned science center professional, having spent a quarter century in the field, Høeg is

also forward-looking, securing Experimentarium's capacity for success for years to come. The jury honored Høeg for his vision and commitment. During the last three years, Høeg raised an impressive US \$105 million from Danish foundations for the center's renewal and expansion. Some of the funds were used to purchase the old bottling plant that the center had been renting since opening in 1991. The remaining amount will finance not only two new floors with more exhibition space, but also a multipurpose hall with seating for 400, a larger café and museum store, a multimedia workshop, and a large outdoor exhibition area and botanic garden on the roof. The 140,000-square-foot project will be managed by Høeg, who postponed his retirement until the expansion is complete. The grand reopening is scheduled for 2015.

This year's Leading Edge Award jury was chaired by **Jan Luth**, Exploration Place, Wichita, Kansas; and its members included **Christopher Cropper**, Maryland Science Center, Baltimore; **Erica Lacey**, Kirby Science Discovery Center, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; **Steve Langsdorf**, Roto, Dublin, Ohio; **Azuka I. MuMin**, COSI, Columbus, Ohio; **Keith Ostfeld**, Children's Museum of Houston, Texas; **Rae Ostman**, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada; **Whitney Owens**, Great Lakes Science Center, Cleveland, Ohio; **Erik Stengler**, University of the West of England, Bristol, United Kingdom; and **Susan Webb Rawls**, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, Illinois. ASTC thanks the jury and the Maryland Science Center for hosting the deliberations.

About ASTC

The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) is a global organization providing collective voice and professional support 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 640 members in 47 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.

###