



Bonnie VanDorn Honored with Fellow Award for Outstanding Contribution

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Bonnie VanDorn, the retiring executive director of the Association of Science-Technology Centers, was presented today with the *ASTC Fellow Award for Outstanding Contribution*, the Association's highest honor. VanDorn accepted the award from Lesley Lewis, ASTC's president and the CEO of the Ontario Science Centre, Toronto, and Wit Ostrenko, ASTC's immediate past president and the president of the Museum of Science and Industry, Tampa, Florida, at the opening session of the 2009 ASTC Annual Conference. The conference, the world's largest gathering of science center professionals, is being hosted this year by the brand new Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.

The *ASTC Fellow Award* is bestowed upon individuals who merit special recognition for their significant contributions to the advancement of public understanding and appreciation of science and technology or of ASTC itself. First presented in 1974, it was most recently awarded in 2008 to Dennis Wint, president and CEO of The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.

The text of VanDorn's award reads: "The Board of Directors and Members of the Association of Science-Technology Centers hereby present the Fellow Award for Outstanding Contribution to Bonnie VanDorn for leading ASTC from its modest beginnings to a truly global community of science center professionals, while simultaneously expanding the size, stature, and strength of the entire field. Bonnie used a reflective encyclopedic knowledge of ASTC's members—the people they employ, the challenges they face, and the audiences they serve—to help build capacity, nurture creativity, and cultivate inclusiveness in all. Buoyant, brilliant, inquisitive, and persevering, she steered ASTC's course steadfastly for twenty-seven years, earning our deepest admiration and respect."

Prior to serving as ASTC's executive director, VanDorn was the director of education at the Pacific Science Center (Seattle, WA). She holds a Master of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Washington.

"The science center and museum field has seen incredible growth—on many important levels—under Bonnie's leadership," said Ostrenko. "She helped build a thriving, vibrant association, and her impact will be felt by many, many people and places for years to come."

The Association of Science-Technology Centers is an organization dedicated to furthering public engagement with science among increasingly diverse audiences. ASTC encourages excellence and innovation in informal science learning by serving and linking its members worldwide and advancing their common goals. Through strategic alliances and global partnerships, ASTC also supports science centers and museums in proactively addressing critical societal issues, locally and globally, where understanding of and engagement with science are essential. Founded in 1973, ASTC now numbers nearly 600 members in 45 countries. Members include 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. Visit www.astc.org to learn more about ASTC and to find a science center near you.