

Wendy Malloy
Pacific Science Center
Seattle, WA
(206) 443-2879
wendy_malloy@pacsci.org

**PACIFIC SCIENCE CENTER'S 2009 SCIENCE CHAMPIONS WINNERS
ANNOUNCED;**

***Washington State LASER – a program of Pacific Science Center –
Announces Recipients of the 2009 Science Education Advocate Awards***

SEATTLE – The path to success in science is challenging. But Kim Fowler is always up for a challenge. As senior research engineer at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) in Richland, WA, Fowler's career has always been focused on helping others find their niche in science and mathematics encouraging young women and minorities to pursue technical career paths.

Not only has Fowler found her place but she's done it in a big way and is among an elite group of successful individuals and organizations who have brought home a Science Champions: Science Education Advocate Award for Washington State.

Each year, the Washington State LASER (Washington State Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform) program, of which Pacific Science Center is a partner, recognizes five individuals, organizations and/or project teams who have gone above and beyond by promoting the importance of science education among the general public and/or the education system.

Pacific Science Center is proud to be a part of the 3rd annual Science Champions: Science Education Advocate Awards; a premier competition among top contenders who exhibited outstanding advocacy for science education in the state of Washington.

"Awardees are being recognized for their advocacy efforts – not necessarily their work as science educators. We want to stress how important strong community support and advocacy is to developing science literacy in our state," said Dennis Schatz, senior vice president for Strategic Programs for Pacific Science Center at Pacific Science Center and co-director for LASER.

They have done this by: promoting the importance of science education among the general public, seeking out new and diverse participants or investors in science education, enabling and influencing others to act in the interests of science education, or making enhancements to science education by efforts at local, regional and state level in Washington.

Efforts at all levels of science education - including early learner, K-12, vocational, undergraduate, graduate, adult, and informal/public science education - were eligible for consideration.

-More-

The five awardees receive \$5,000 each to be awarded to the not-for-profit organization or public education entity of their choice for use in its efforts on behalf of science education. The monetary reward as well as funding for the awards process was generously provided by The Boeing Company.

Recipients will be recognized on June 12, 11:30-1:30 p.m. at the Washington Athletic Club in Seattle (The Washington Athletic Club is located on the corner of 6th Avenue and Union Street. The Club's main entrance is on 6th.). This event includes lunch, an awards ceremony, and a forum with the winners to discuss the social responsibility of science and science education. This event is sponsored by Washington State Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER), City Club, and The Boeing Company. To register, please go to <http://www.seattlecityclub.org/>

According to Edmund O. Schweitzer, III Ph.D, one of the distinguished recipients of the Science Champions: Science Education Advocate Award, the discoveries of science are the basics of what we know.

“The sciences are the roots of technology. But it's bigger than that. Technology changes, it rusts, but science is forever,” he said.

Recipients will also be recognized at local awards ceremonies to highlight their achievements among their peers and within their communities.

Individual Awards

Edmund O. Schweitzer, III Ph.D.

Schweitzer is president of Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. in Pullman.

Washington State is viewed by many nationally as a leader in science education which, in no small part, due to the countless hours Schweitzer has spent advocating for science education.

Among many other accomplishments, Dr. Schweitzer established a program many years ago that allows each employee at Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. to designate \$200 to be donated to the school of their choice. All of the schools in Pullman and many others in the area have received substantial amounts of money with the understanding that the funds be used specifically for math and science education.

Dr. Schweitzer's donation will be awarded to Palouse Discovery Science Center in Pullman.

Kim M. Fowler

Fowler is a Senior Research Engineer, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) in Richland.

As a passionate proponent for science education and reform, Fowler has developed a set of energy, environment, and sustainable related activities she brings to classrooms ranging from third grade through high school. These activities were developed by Fowler after learning about the value of inquiry-centered lessons and they are intended to be linked to the existing classroom curriculum.

Fowler's \$5,000 donation will be awarded to Yakima Valley/Tri-Cities MESA.

-More-

Project Team

The vision for the **Spokane Youth Environmental Conference (SYEC)** is to promote environmental science, encourage students to conduct scientific investigations, and then provide a venue for students to showcase their projects.

For the past 12 years, a group of scientists, communicators and educators have worked together to create a professional-type conference with the students submitting abstracts, and then presenting either oral presentations or visual poster exhibits to their peers and for evaluation by professionals. Students learn from each other about local and global environmental issues and concrete actions each can take to help address these issues. Additionally, the conference provides students an opportunity to experience other elements of scientific-type conferences, such as keynote speaker, group activities promoting environmental awareness, and a sit-down lunch.

The recipient of Spokane Youth Environmental Conference award money will be announced shortly.

Organization Awards

The Northwest Association for Biomedical Research (NWABR) in Seattle is a non-profit educational organization established in 1988 to promote the public understanding of biomedical research and its ethical conduct.

At its core, the Northwest Association for Biomedical Research (NWABR) invites, equips and connects biomedical scientists with citizens of all ages. One of the many programs the organization promotes is the Spokane Science Café which was launched in October 2008 and reaches a monthly audience of scientists and non scientists who dialog informally with an expert, exchanging ideas and information. Another touch point for NWABR's cadre of trained volunteers is the Student Bio Expo. In its 9th year, the Expo is a novel program that engages high school students in creative ways to demonstrate their understanding of the life sciences, and connects them to mentor-scientists.

NWABR's \$5,000 donation will be awarded to NWABR

The Seattle Biomedical Research Institute (SBRI) advances global health. Their infectious disease research is the foundation for new drugs, vaccines and diagnostics that benefit those who need the most help: the 14 million who will otherwise die each year from infectious diseases.

SBRI's mission is to eliminate the world's most devastating infectious diseases through leadership in scientific discovery. Through SBRI's 15+ year affiliation with the University of Washington, dozens of undergraduate graduate and post-doctoral students have had the opportunity to work and complete their education goals at SBRI. When high school students from "grades 9 to 20" leave SBRI, they are veterans of a professional working environment committed to improving the lives of others, and their careers are advanced by their mentorship participation in SBRI outreach programs.

SBRI's \$5,000 donation will be awarded to BioQuest, a science outreach program at SBRI.

More information regarding the awardees is at: <http://www.wastatelaser.org/awards/>

-More-

Washington State LASER is a private public partnership working with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) as well as with Battelle, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, and the Pacific Science Center. Washington State LASER received financial and in-kind support from OSPI, Battelle, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Boeing, Pacific Science Center, Merck Institute for Science Education and other global and local businesses.

For more information about Washington State LASER and the Science Education Advocate Awards, please visit <http://www.wastatelaser.org>

-0-

Pacific Science Center inspires a lifelong interest in science, mathematics and technology by engaging diverse communities through interactive and innovative exhibits and programs. Pacific Science Center began as the United States Science Pavilion during the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. Millions came to explore the wonders of science during the World's Fair and upon the closing ceremonies, the Science Pavilion was given new life as the private, not-for-profit Pacific Science Center, becoming the first U.S. museum founded as a science and technology center. For more information about Pacific Science Center, please call (206) 443-2001 or visit the web site at www.pacificsciencecenter.org. Pacific Science Center is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and relies on admissions, memberships, and donations to continue our educational mission, programs, and exhibits.

###