

Dennis Schatz Named Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) Fellow at Annual Conference

Bryce Seidl – President/CEO, Pacific Science Center
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Dennis Schatz, Co-Director of Washington State LASER and Vice President - Education at Pacific Science Center, was named an ASTC Fellow late last month by the Association of Science-Technology Centers, an international association of science and technology centers, museums and organizations.

This distinction, awarded to only 24 people in the history of ASTC, goes to people who have made outstanding lifetime contributions in the field of science education. Dennis now shares this distinction with people like Frank Oppenheimer, (who started the Exploratorium in San Francisco) and George Tressel (who built the Informal Science Education effort at the National Science Foundation).

The fact that Dennis is the first non-governmental, non-CEO to receive this award demonstrates the extraordinary accomplishments he has produced in the program arena of science education. Accomplishments cited in the nomination letter and award presentation include:

- * Dennis co-initiated and co-directs Washington State LASER (Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform), which is one of the most extensive, statewide science education reform efforts in the country that transforms how science is taught in schools – and the only one with leadership in a science center.

- * Dennis is co-author of many curriculum materials used by teachers, including *The Universe at your Fingertips*, *More Universe at Your Fingertips* and *Astro Adventures*. *Astro Adventures* is the result of more than 15 years collaborating with NASA's Washington State Space Grant program and is an inquiry-based astronomy curriculum used by numerous school districts to meet the elementary level astronomy standards.

- * Many of his efforts at Pacific Science Center have become the model for programs elsewhere. He has been instrumental in building one of the largest science education outreach programs in the country, including a fleet of 15-passenger vans (*Science On Wheels*) that serve more than 250,000 people annually in every county of Washington State. Under his leadership, Pacific Science Center began touring exhibits to nontraditional locations around the Northwest (e.g. county fair grounds, shopping malls, city parks). Two of these exhibits, *Whales: Giants of the Deep* and *Dinosaurs: A Journey Through Time*, were groundbreaking in that they took large robotic creatures to non-traditional sites.

- * Dennis led the development of *Science Carnival*, a science center under tents that toured to non-traditional locations throughout the West. This exhibit became the model for new and developing science centers across the United States. More than 15 museums got their start with exhibits and professional development from staff led by Dennis. This project also produced two

popular publications, Science Center Know-How and Collaborations: Critical Criteria for Success.

* Dennis has held leadership positions in a number of science education professional organizations, including ASTC, the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and the Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP) – an international astronomy education society. He is presently the President of the ASP Board of Trustees.

* On top of all these accomplishments, he is a prolific author of award winning children's books. His award winning Uncover A T.rex is available in 14 languages. In total, his 18 books have sold more than 1.5 million copies, each one having impact in the most important of learning environments – the home.

Needless to say, all of us at Pacific Science Center are terribly proud of Dennis and his accomplishments. Next time you see Dennis please congratulate him on this extraordinary recognition.