



Disinfectant with a blue additive being used in Conakry, Guinea, shows when clothing and surfaces are clean so disease does not spread.

The AAAS-Lemelson Invention Ambassadors came to AAAS in July to tell the public about their inventions and to meet with representatives of federal agencies such as the Patent and Trademark Office and the Small Business Administration, as well as with Rep. Bill Foster (D-IL), a physicist and inventor who serves on the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

As part of the three-day session, the Invention Ambassadors received public engagement training from biologist-turned-filmmaker Randy Olson, who helped them shape their experience as inventors into compelling narratives.

Invention Ambassador Luis Almodovar, who is currently working on an advanced tool that can suture within the human heart via a catheter without opening the chest, gave a presentation at AAAS with the entertainment value of a standup comedy routine. He explained later that it was the very first time he had delivered such a presentation, abandoning the data-heavy scientific journal presentation format he is more accustomed to in his day job as a neurosurgeon.

Almodovar said Olson helped him with tweaks to what came off as an upbeat, moving pitch “right up to the day of the presentation.”

This year’s class of inventors, as well as program alumni, often mentioned the camaraderie and refreshing feeling of belonging associated with the experience of being a AAAS-Lemelson Invention Ambassador. Being an inventor can mean a solitary existence, several of them said.

“It felt wonderful to meet part of our tribe,” said Diana Yousef, who with fellow ambassador Huda Elasaad is working to commercialize a waterless toilet for use in areas with no sewage systems. “The journey to this point had, in the past, been a fairly lonely and challenging one, and it was really energizing to meet others who’ve experienced the same or similar pathways.”

“There were no ego issues,” said Almodovar, “quite the contrary. We shared and had a great time. For me, I loved it.”

While this year’s inventors were already talking about possible collaborations among the group, 2015-16 ambassadors Juan Gilbert, whose inventions include a universally designed voting technology; Lisa DeLuca, who is IBM’s most prolific female inventor; and Michael

AAAS Annual Election: Preliminary Announcement

The 2017 AAAS election of general and section officers is scheduled to begin in October. All members will receive a ballot for election of the president-elect, members of the Board of Directors, and members of the Committee on Nominations. Additionally, members registered in sections (up to three) will receive ballots for the specified section elections. Biographical information for the candidates will be provided along with ballots. The general election slate is listed below. The list of section candidates can be viewed at www.aaas.org/annual-election.

Notice to our international members:

In an effort to conserve resources, AAAS will be sending electronic election ballots to our non-U.S.-based members. To ensure that you receive your ballot, please make sure your email is up to date with AAAS by logging on to www.aaas.org. 1) Click on “Member Login” (if you have not yet created an account, you will be prompted to do so); 2) After you log in, click on the red “My Profile” button in the upper right-hand corner of the page; 3) Click on “Edit My Contact Information” in the left-hand sidebar; 4) Update your email and click on the “Save” button.

If you would like to request a special paper ballot, please send an email with your name and address with your request to elections@aaas.org.

General Election Slate

President-Elect:

Steven Chu, Stanford University; Elias A. Zerhouni, Sanofi, Inc.

Board of Directors:

Rosina M. Bierbaum, University of Michigan; Laura H. Greene, National High Magnetic Field Laboratory/ Florida State University; Peter S. Kim, Stanford University; Robert S. Langer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Committee on Nominations:

Sallie (Penny) Chisholm, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Mary Frank Fox, Georgia Institute of Technology; Jeffrey I. Gordon, Washington University in St. Louis; Eric D. Isaacs, University of Chicago; Arthur Lupia, University of Michigan; Nicholas A. Peppas, University of Texas at Austin; Amita Sehgal, University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine; Vaughan C. Turekian, U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

Smith, who is director of the Intel Academic Program for Data Science and the Internet of Things, said the friendships and networks begun during the program will endure.

“The Invention Ambassadors are a very diverse group of individuals. Through my experience as an ambassador, I was reminded that invention takes place in many forms and disciplines,” said Smith, who has helped educational institutions around the world to include data science, artificial intelligence, and green technologies in their course offerings. “My path as an inventor has expanded beyond my core expertise.”

Together, the AAAS-Lemelson Invention Ambassadors show a profound commitment to building support for scientific and technological innovation to help society.

“An inventor is someone who solves problems and advances civilization,” said Kang, “and this requires a commitment to encouraging the inventiveness of society as a whole. If you can imagine one inventor coming up with solutions to some of the world’s hardest problems—the Nikola Teslas, the Thomas Alva Edisons, the Elon Musks of the world—just imagine what an entire society of inventors could come up with. As inventors, we have an obligation to pass on what we’ve learned and encourage future generations.”

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