

2010 Sigma Xi Awards Announced



Michael J. Spivey, a professor of cognitive science at the University of California, Merced, known for his innovative studies of language and visual perception, will

receive Sigma Xi's 2010 William Procter Prize for Scientific Achievement, the Society's highest honor.

The Procter Prize and other top annual awards will be presented at the Sigma Xi Annual Meeting and International Research Conference next November in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The 2010 John P. McGovern Science and Society Award will go to **Barbara Gastel** at Texas A&M University. A professor of veterinary integrative biosciences and of humanities in medicine, she has devoted much of her career to improving scientific communication.



Howard R. Moskowitz, an expert on sensory psychology and its commercial application, will receive the Walston Chubb Award for Innovation. He is president and CEO of Moskowitz

Jacobs Inc. in White Plains, New York.

And **Kevin R. Gurney** will be honored with Sigma Xi's Young Investigator Award. He is an associate professor of earth and atmospheric science at Purdue University whose work on tracking CO₂ emissions has been groundbreaking.



Procter Prize winner Michael Spivey has a long history of studying language and visual perception. He was the driving force in creating a new line of research in psycholinguistics.

He uses eye-tracking and computer mouse-tracking equipment to study how humans perceive and respond to what they hear and see.

Motion-tracking software and hardware document not only the subjects' final

(continued on next page)

From the President



In Support of Sigma Xi

Giving back has been a recurrent theme and even the title of my last installment of "From the President." I suppose the value I see in supporting the scientific enterprise is derived from my own gratitude to all of those who have helped me and shared in the joys of my own experience as a teacher, mentor and researcher.

Sigma Xi has always stood for values that I respect and has provided me with a means to give back. I now wish to encourage you to give back and to support Sigma Xi in its mission to enhance and promote the scientific enterprise.

A common complaint about our annual meeting has been the level of political wrangling that may seem to dominate the meeting. Therefore, it was very heartening to me to have so many of the delegates at this year's annual meeting approach me about taking a more active role in Sigma Xi.

I believe this likely occurs at each annual meeting; however, because I presided as president at this meeting I became more aware of this response. There are in fact many ways to serve Sigma Xi and at many different levels of commitment.

The easiest way to start is at the chapter level. Is your chapter as active as you would like? Are the current programs of your chapter in line with your interests and commitments? Is your chapter not serving you well, or do you just want to get more involved?

You can support the activities of your chapter or serve as an agent for change. Most of us started our service to Sigma Xi in just that way. We stepped up, took on the responsibility for programs we wanted to make happen and evolved as leaders of our local chapters. Yes, it was work, but clearly to many of us the rewards were significant enough to cause us to seek greater involvement in a Society whose value we hold dear.

Sigma Xi, at the international level, operates through a committee system where our members bring knowledge, experience and chapter-wide perspectives of the many issues that the Society must deal with. Membership on one of our committees is often the starting point for many in the governance of the Society.

Our Web site, www.sigmaxi.org, lists the committees of Sigma Xi and provides an e-mail link to volunteer for service on a specific committee or on any committee in general. You should know that to maintain continuity on committees the turn over of membership is cyclical, so please be patient and your opportunity will come.

Finally, those who wish to dedicate themselves to the future of the Society can become directly involved in its governance. Serving on the nominations committee for your region or constituency group is often an introduction to this level of commitment.

Taking on the directorship of a region or constituency group places you on the Board of Directors. This is a significant commitment that requires your time to work in your region or constituency to support chapters and promote Sigma Xi. It also brings with it the fiduciary responsibilities of serving on the board.

Most importantly it brings you the satisfaction of taking a stand for what you believe in and the friendship that grows out of working closely with like-minded individuals who share a common cause. I highly recommend that you become involved; it will be a rewarding experience both for you and the Society.

Howard Ceri

Thirty-Five Students Receive Medals at Sigma Xi Conference

Thirty-five student researchers received medals and cash awards for their poster presentations at the 2009 Sigma Xi International Research Conference in Texas.

More than 200 students presented their research at this year's conference, representing nearly 100 academic institutions.

The winners of a special Student Choice Award were **Aditya Kaddu**, **Zhao Kong** and **Daniel Rist** of Rice University. The award was sponsored by the Washington, D.C., Chapter of Sigma Xi and carried a \$250 cash prize. Medalists for superior presentations were as follows:

Doctoral Candidates

Interdisciplinary Research

Pearce Creasman—Texas A&M University

Physics & Astronomy

Derek Nowak—Portland State University

Math & Computer Science

Faisal Reza—Duke University

Graduate Students

Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

Anna Coleman-Hulbert—Portland State University

Geo-Sciences

Ruth Mullins—Texas A&M University

Engineering

David Kvale—University of Toledo

Undergraduate Students

Biochemistry

Valeria Gonzalez—University of California, Irvine

Behavioral Sciences

Jamar Whaley—Queens College; **Michael Gonzalez**—University of California, Irvine

Cellular & Molecular Biology

Jing Han—Northwestern University; **Franklin Garcia** and **Mayra Carrillo**—University of California, Irvine; **Vineet Singal**—Stanford University; **Hatim Thaker** and **Danny Jandali**—Northwestern University

Chemistry

Derek Rhoades—Ohio Northern University; **Abdul Jangda**—University of Houston, Downtown

Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

Elizabeth Lavoie—State University of New York, Plattsburgh; **Krystle Minear**—Weber State University

Engineering

David Garland and **Kenneth Davis**—Rice University; **Maha Haji**—University of California, Berkeley

Environmental Science

Chang Woo Lee—University of Texas at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

Geo-Sciences

James Burnes—Lamar University

Interdisciplinary Research

Patricia Troy—Ohio Wesleyan University; **Michael Chien**—University of Pennsylvania; **Wee Leow**—Texas A&M University

Math & Computer Science

Kyle Pounder—Saint Mary's College of California

Physics & Astronomy

Jake Connors—The Ohio State University

Physiology & Immunology

Erick Maravill—University of California, Irvine

High School Students

Cellular & Molecular Biology

Mirza Shabbir—Harlem Children Society

Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

Gabriel Joachim—Cibola High School

Chemistry

Rodney Agnant—Harlem Children Society •

Sigma Xi Leaders in Washington, D.C.



In Washington, D.C., recently, Sigma Xi President-elect Joseph Whittaker (left) and Executive Director Jerome Baker flank Sigma Xi member and U.S. Congressman Rush Holt after discussing increasing budgets for federal science agencies.

2010 Sigma Xi Awards

(continued from previous page)

answers but also the answers they considered along the way. The end result is a more accurate representation of how the human brain processes information.

McGovern Award winner Barbara Gastel is Knowledge Community Editor for AuthorAID, a major project of the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications. She co-authored the sixth edition of Robert Day's *How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper* and is now co-authoring the seventh edition.

These new editions speak to globalization and digitizing of publishing. Gastel wrote the *Health Writer's Handbook*. She is chief editor of *Science Editor*, the periodical of The Council of Science Editors.

Chubb Award winner Howard Moskowitz created a new technology, called Mind Genomics, to better understand the way consumers think about products and about social issues.

The technology creates and links scientific based databases into a system called Rule Developing Experimentation (RDE). RDE helps companies worldwide to optimize products, messaging and graphic design.

Young Investigator Award winner Kevin Gurney focuses his research on the global carbon cycle, understanding sinks for atmospheric CO₂, how CO₂ changes connect to climate change and how to connect good climate science to development of sound public policy.

He was the lead author on a 2002 paper addressing CO₂ inversions that is listed in the top 1 percent of *Nature* papers. He received a grant from NASA to build a CO₂ emissions inventory for the U.S. and led a project to create a high-resolution, interactive map of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels.

The 2010 Sigma Xi Honorary Members will be announced at a later time. Profiles of Sigma Xi award winners will appear in upcoming issues of *American Scientist*. •