

NEWS

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Date: Sept. 9, 2015

Stuff Matters: Exploring the Marvelous Materials That Shape Our Man-Made World Wins Best Book Award From Academies; Particle Fever, Your Inner Fish, Detroit News, Reuters Also Take Prizes

WASHINGTON -- The recipients of the 2015 Communication Awards were announced today by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Supported by the W.M. Keck Foundation since 2003 as part of the Keck *Futures Initiative*, these prestigious awards -- each of which includes a \$20,000 prize -- recognize excellence in reporting and communicating science, engineering, and medicine to the general public. The winners will be honored during a ceremony on Oct. 14 in Washington, D.C.

"We enjoyed an embarrassment of riches this year, with outstanding entries representing a tremendous diversity of scientific subjects," said May Berenbaum, NAS member and chair of the communication awards [selection committee](#), and professor and head of entomology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. "Choosing the best among the best was difficult but the winners are exemplars of how excellent popular science writing can make complex science understandable, relevant, and thoroughly engaging."

Selected from 344 entries for works published or aired in 2014, the recipients of this year's awards are

Book

Mark Miodownik for *Stuff Matters: Exploring the Marvelous Materials That Shape Our Man-Made World* (Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co.)

"A fascinating account of the extraordinary nature of the seemingly ordinary materials of modern-day life"

Film/Radio/TV

For the first time, two recipients were selected in this category:

David Kaplan and Mark Levinson for "Particle Fever"

"An engrossing, minute-by-minute diary of the roller-coaster nature of scientific discovery"

Michael Rosenfeld, David Dugan, and Neil Shubin for "Your Inner Fish" (HHMI/Tangled Bank Studios)

"An enthralling examination of the ancient animal ancestry in the fossil record and in our own bodies"

Newspaper/Magazine

Karen Bouffard, *The Detroit News*, for the series "Detroit Is the Deadliest City for Children" (January 2014)

"A devastating portrayal of the complex factors underlying a city's public health emergency"

Online

The Reuters team for the series "Water's Edge: The Crisis of Rising Sea Levels"

"A comprehensive investigation of a slow-motion environmental crisis with imaginative data visualization and interactive tools"

The National Academies Keck *Futures Initiative* was created in 2003 to encourage interdisciplinary research and is funded by a 15-year, \$40 million grant from the W.M. Keck Foundation. Nominations for next year's Communication Awards will be accepted in early 2016 for work published or broadcast in 2015. For more information on the *Futures Initiative* and the Communication Awards, please

visit www.keckfutures.org. For more information about the W.M. Keck Foundation, please visit <http://www.wmkeck.org>.

Members of the media who would like to attend this year's awards ceremony on Oct. 14 at the National Academy of Sciences building in Washington, D.C., should e-mail commawards@nas.edu by Oct. 5 to receive complimentary tickets (limited seats available: first-come, first-served basis).

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine are private, nonprofit institutions that provide independent, objective analysis and advice to the nation to solve complex problems and inform public policy decisions related to science, technology, and medicine. The Academies operate under an 1863 congressional charter to the National Academy of Sciences, signed by President Lincoln.

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