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LASKER FOUNDATION RECOGNIZES NEXT GENERATION OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATORS

(New York, July 9, 2020) The Lasker Foundation today announced the winners of its 7th annual Lasker Essay Contest, recognizing the next generation of science communicators. The Essay Contest invites young scientists from around the world to discuss big questions in biomedical research and policy.

This year, the Foundation is awarding 11 prizes for the top essays submitted by health professions and biomedical research trainees, who wrote about **how a notable scientist has inspired them – through the scientist’s personality, life experiences, and/or through their scientific contributions.**

The 2020 Lasker Foundation Essay Contest Winners:

- **Emily Ashkin** from the Stanford University School of Medicine, who wrote about J. Michael Bishop
- **David Basta** from the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine, who wrote about Alexander Varshavsky
- **Avash Das** from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, who wrote about Michael Brown and Joseph Goldstein
- **William Dunn** from the Cambridge University Hospitals, who wrote about Stephen Hawking
- **Safwan Elkhatib** from the University of Nebraska Medical Center, who wrote about Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin
- **Laurel Gabler** from the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, who wrote about Abhay and Rani Bang
- **Kwabena Kusi-Mensah** from the University of Cambridge, who wrote about Tu Youyou and Harold Freeman
- **Lisa Learman** from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, who wrote about Barbara McClintock
- **Olivia Lucero** from Oregon Health & Science University, who wrote about Mary-Claire King
- **Hannah Mason** from the University of Cambridge, who wrote about John Schiller
- **Samantha Wong** from the University of California Davis School of Medicine, who wrote about Anthony Fauci

“Now more than ever, our society has an urgent need for medical and research leaders who can effectively communicate about the central role of science in improving health around the world,”

said Claire Pomeroy, President of the Lasker Foundation. “This year’s winning essays illustrate the inspiration our prize winners drew from a diverse range of scientists and highlight the importance of senior role models in galvanizing the next generation of these leaders.”

All winners will receive a \$2,000 educational stipend and are invited to attend the 2021 Lasker Awards Luncheon in New York City on October 1, 2021. The contest was open to medical school students, interns, residents, and fellows; doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows in biomedical sciences; and graduate students in public health or other health professions programs from around the world.

The winning essays are available on the Lasker Foundation [website](#).

About the Lasker Foundation: The Lasker Foundation seeks to increase support for biomedical research by celebrating the power of biomedical science to save and improve human lives. Through its internationally renowned Lasker Awards, educational initiatives, and public advocacy, the Foundation recognizes the most important achievements in science and public service, supports and encourages the scientific leaders of tomorrow, and raises awareness of the ever-present need for research funding. Established in 1942 by Albert and Mary Lasker, the Foundation is committed to inspiring robust and sustained support for biomedical research, fueled by Mary Lasker’s call to action: “If you think research is expensive, try disease!”

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