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The Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation Announces Winners of Essay Contest

*Winning Entries from the University of South Alabama, NYU, the University of
Iowa and Yale*

NEW YORK, August 25, 2014 – The Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, a longtime advocate of medical research, today announced the winners of its inaugural essay contest which asked medical and health professions students and fellows to offer their ideas on the most innovative ways to build support and ensure funding for medical research.

The first place winner of \$10,000 is Peter Soh, a medical student at the University of South Alabama, who proposes tax credits and scholarships to reduce financial barriers for student scientists and encourage investment in future medical professionals. Soh has also won an all-expense paid trip to New York City to attend the prestigious 2014 Lasker Awards and meet this year's Lasker Award winners on September 19.

An award of \$5,000 goes to Michael Burel of NYU School of Medicine, who believes sparking an interest in science among a broad audience increases public support. He created Biocanvas, an innovative website with over 170,000 visitors daily who share knowledge through science-as-art images.

A third place prize of \$2,000 is awarded to Nick Andresen of the University of Iowa, who advocates for the power of crowdsourcing to support medical research and champions a non-profit database to evaluate and validate the credibility of research projects.

A \$1,000 Honorable Mention goes to Gregg Gonsalves, a PhD candidate at Yale School of Public Health, who suggests an annual national day of advocacy in Washington, D.C. and congressional districts nationwide, where local researchers will meet with their members of Congress to put a personal face on science.

The contest, which was judged by a committee of the Lasker Foundation's Board of Directors, was launched to involve future health professionals in finding creative ways to overcome a decade-long crisis in U.S. medical research funding. It is hoped that their voices will spur broad public discussion of the issue. Entry was open to U.S. medical school students and fellows; doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows in biomedical research; graduate students in public health programs; and graduate students in other health professions programs.

To read the winning entries and for additional information, please visit www.laskerfoundation.org.

[The Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation](http://www.laskerfoundation.org) envisions a healthier world through medical research. Our mission is to improve health by accelerating support for medical research through recognition of research excellence, public education and advocacy. The Foundation's Awards Program honors the contributions of scientists, clinicians, and public servants who have made major advances in the understanding, diagnosis, treatment, cure or prevention of human disease.