

Lasker Foundation and Diamonstein-Spielvogel Foundation Publish Book of Essays by Young Scientists

Young scientists share personal stories of the legendary biomedical researchers and mentors who inspired their careers

(New York City – November 10, 2020) – The Lasker Foundation and the Diamonstein-Spielvogel Foundation today announced the publication of “Inspiration: Young Scientists Reflect” edited by author, and advocate, Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel.

The publication also honors the 75th Anniversary of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, and the 25th Anniversary of the PEN America/Diamonstein-Spielvogel Art of the Essay Award. It includes a foreword, commissioned by the Diamonstein-Spielvogel Foundation, by author, journalist, and M.D., Rivka Galchen, who explores the history of the essay form and its early development by 16th century French humanist and philosopher Michel de Montaigne. It also contains a tribute to the PEN America/Diamonstein-Spielvogel Art of the Essay Award, by PEN America, the organization which stands at the intersection of literature and human rights to protect open expression in the United States and worldwide.

The 11 essays in the booklet are the winning submissions to the 2020 Lasker Essay Contest, an annual global competition that engages young scientists and clinicians in discussion about the role of biomedical research in our society today. This year, students and young researchers were asked to describe how a notable scientist had inspired them – through the scientist’s personality, life experiences, and/or through their scientific contributions. The Lasker Foundation received over 300 submissions to the Contest.

“These essays reflect the altruism of senior scientists as they guide younger men and women in the field and the power of mentorship in helping trainees define their endeavors in biomedical careers,” said Claire Pomeroy, president of the Lasker Foundation. “Reflected in these essays is that the paths to careers in bioscience are diverse, and for many young people, the inspirational role played by their legendary predecessors is key.”

“This booklet celebrates both the work of the Lasker Foundation and the PEN/Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay. We are pleased to honor this cohort of young scientists, who are among the next generation of science communicators,” said Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel, Chair of the Diamonstein-Spielvogel Foundation. “Their perceptive essays help us all appreciate the importance of inspiration in the field of biomedical research, as we transition from the digital age to the life-science age, fraught with difficult medical and moral questions.”

The featured essayists are:

- **Emily Ashkin**, Stanford University School of Medicine, wrote about J. Michael Bishop
- **David Basta**, USC–Caltech MD-PhD Program, Keck School of Medicine of USC, wrote about Alexander Varshavsky

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

Inspiration: Young Scientists Reflect will be available starting December 7, 2020. To receive a copy of the book, please contact the Lasker Foundation at info@laskerfoundation.org or the Diamonstein-Spielvogel Foundation at DSFoundation@aol.com.

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