



17th Annual L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards

5 EXCEPTIONAL WOMEN HONORED FOR THEIR GROUND-BREAKING DISCOVERIES IN THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Paris, March 3rd, 2015. As the International Year of Light celebrates science and knowledge all over the world, the L'Oréal Foundation and UNESCO will present, on March 18th, the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards to five outstanding women scientists and 15 grants to promising young researchers. Each of these women is a brilliant example of scientific excellence. They prove everyday that women can greatly contribute to scientific progress in a field still largely dominated by men.

Well into the 3rd millennium, much progress remains to be made to reach gender balance in science. Only 30% of the world researchers are women and many barriers and obstacles discourage women from entering or pursuing a career in science. Dedicated to both honoring distinguished women scientists and supporting promising young researchers, the L'Oréal-UNESCO program gives five annual Awards and accelerates the careers of 15 exceptional young women chosen among over 230 Fellowships awarded every year all over the world. Since 1998, the For Women in Science program has honored 2,250 greatly talented women in over 110 countries

The 17th edition of the L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards

This year's L'Oréal-UNESCO For women in Science Awards Ceremony will be held on the evening of March 18th at the Sorbonne in Paris. On the morning of the 18th, a press conference will be held at the Saint James Albany Hotel in Paris. The 5 Laureates will be announced and the 15 fellows will present their research projects in 3 minutes in a "stand-up" way. Laureates and fellows will then give one-on-one interviews.

A unique exhibition celebrating women in science

Starting today, millions of passengers going through the terminals of the Charles de Gaulle and Orly airports will discover a unique exhibition of the 5 Laureates by world-renowned photographer Brigitte Lacombe.

By traveling the world to meet each of these women, Brigitte Lacombe has created a series of photographs that capture their inspiring spirit and passion. "Aéroports de Paris has been engaged in supporting women in science since 2005. Each year, we support this cause and offer exceptional visibility to increase public awareness", said Benjamin Perret, Aéroports de Paris' communications director.

Female scientists who are changing the world

This year's 5 Laureates of the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards are being honored for their ground-breaking discoveries in the physical sciences. By studying the infinitely large to the infinitely small, they have pushed back the frontiers of knowledge to explain the most fundamental questions of the universe and contribute to solving some of today's greatest challenges. Passionate in life as much as in their work, they are also committed to giving back to their communities and transmitting their love of science.



They were selected in the 5 regions of the world by an independent International Awards Jury made up of 12 prominent international scientists who were personally chosen by the President of the Jury and 1999 Nobel Prize winner, Prof. Ahmed Zewail.

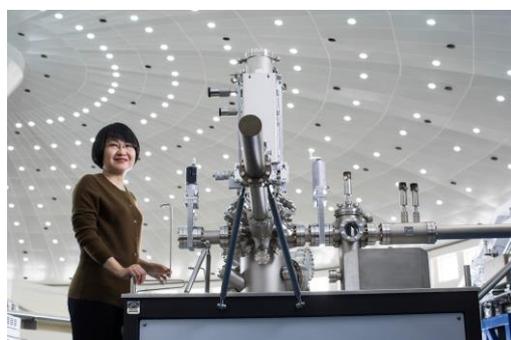
AFRICA AND THE ARAB STATES: Prof. Rajaâ Cherkaoui El Moursli – High Energy Physics and Nuclear Physics
Professor, Mohammed V- Agdal University, Rabat, MOROCCO



Prof. Rajaâ Cherkaoui El Moursli is being honored for her key contribution to one of the greatest discoveries in physics: proof of the existence of the Higgs Boson, the particle responsible for the creation of mass in the universe. Nicknamed «research activist», she dedicates much of her time to raising the level of scientific research in her country and has been instrumental in improving Moroccan healthcare by creating the 1st master's degree in medical physics.

Photo : Brigitte Lacombe

ASIA / PACIFIC: Prof. Yi Xie – Inorganic Chemistry
Professor, University of Science & Technology of China, Hefei, CHINA



Prof. Yi Xie is being honored for her significant contributions to creating new nanomaterials with promising applications in the conversion of heat or sunlight into electricity. Her work will greatly contribute to lessening pollution and boosting energy efficiency, and will open promising prospects for the future. Committed to preserving our planet, she has dedicated her life to finding new and intelligent solutions to address the environmental challenge.

Photo : Brigitte Lacombe

EUROPE: Prof. Dame Carol Robinson - Physical Chemistry - Mass Spectrometry
Professor, University of Oxford, UNITED KINGDOM



Prof. Dame Carol Robinson is being honored for creating a revolutionary method for studying how proteins function, particularly membrane proteins, and establishing a whole new scientific field: gas phase structural biology. Her pioneering work could have a significant impact on medical research. A risk-taker, Prof. Robinson has always done things her way: she left school at 16, studied part-time whilst working and then took an eight year career break to raise her children before returning to academia.

Photo : Brigitte Lacombe



**LATIN AMERICA: Prof. Thaisa Storchi Bergmann – Physics and Astronomy
Professor, Federal University of Rio Grande Do Sul, Porto Alegre Brasil**



Prof. Thaisa Storchi Bergmann is being honored for her work leading to the understanding of massive black holes, one of the most enigmatic and complex phenomena of the universe: she was the first researcher to discover that matter could escape from black holes. Passionate and determined, she is convinced that education for all is the key to a better world and, through her work, she hopes to contribute to promoting science as a captivating and fun career path.

Photo : Brigitte Lacombe

**NORTH AMERICA: Prof. Molly S. Shoichet – Polymer Chemistry
Professor of chemical engineering and applied chemistry, chemistry and biomaterials & biomedical engineering, University of Toronto, Canada**



Prof. Molly S. Shoichet is being honored for the development of new materials to regenerate damaged nerve tissue and for a new method that can deliver drugs directly to the spinal cord and brain. Her work is putting chemistry at the service of medicine in spectacular new ways. A people person, she also participates in special athletic events for people with spinal cord injuries, is actively involved in human rights issues and has contributed to launching a social media campaign designed to “connect today’s research with tomorrow’s reality.”

Photo : Brigitte Lacombe

Additional information and visuals are available on:



- www.loreal.com/medias/press-releases.aspx
- www.discov-her.com/mediacenter (dedicated media center (as of March 3, 2015))

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ABOUT THE L'ORÉAL FOUNDATION

The L'Oréal Foundation is committed to two main causes, that of Women in Science and Beauty for a Better Life. Based on values of excellence, generosity and creativity, science is at the core of the Foundation's commitments, most particularly its commitment to supporting women researchers through its For Women in Science program, a worldwide initiative in partnership with UNESCO. As well, rooted in the belief that beauty care is an essential need met by passionate professionals skilled in creating human relationships, the Foundation has launched several programs anchored by a vision of beauty as a path toward a fairer and more generous society. The Foundation is committed to assisting the economically disadvantaged and those suffering from physical and mental ailments in regaining their sense of self-esteem through beauty care and training in beauty care professions. www.fondationloreal.com

ABOUT UNESCO

Since its creation in 1945, UNESCO has pursued its mission of promoting science at the service of sustainable development and peace. It stresses policies and the reinforcement of capacities in science, technology and innovation, science education, sustainable management of freshwater, ocean and terrestrial resources, the protection of biodiversity and addressing the issue of climate change. The Organization also has an overarching objective to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote equality between men and women, especially in scientific research.

ABOUT AÉROPORTS DE PARIS

Aéroports de Paris builds, develops and manages airports including Paris-Charles de Gaulle, Paris-Orly and Paris-Le Bourget. In 2012, Aéroports de Paris handled almost 89 million passengers, 2.3 million tonnes of freight and mail in Paris, and 40 million passengers at airports abroad. Boasting an exceptional geographic location and a major catchment area, Aéroports de Paris Group is pursuing its strategy of adapting and modernising its terminal facilities and upgrading quality of services; the Group also intends to develop its retail and real estate businesses. In 2012, Group revenue stood at €2,640 million and net income at €341 million. Registered office: 291, boulevard Raspail, 75014 Paris, France. A public limited company (Société Anonyme) with share capital of €296,881,806. Registered in the Paris Trade and Company under no. 552 016 628 RCS Paris.