

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Rosalind Franklin Society Announces "Not Next Time!" Campaign to Ensure that Women Scientists are not Considered as an Afterthought for Awards**

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October 1, 2009, New Rochelle, NY — The *Rosalind Franklin Society (RFS)* has announced a new campaign, "Not Next Time!" to ensure that women are included in any awards consideration right from the beginning. When the *Geoffrey Beene Gives Back® Foundation* unveiled its first "Rock Stars of Science," all 13 honorees were men.

"'Rock Stars of Science' is not representing the best of science if half of the population is left out. In the biological and biomedical sciences, half of our PhD students are women. To exemplify only men as models of exciting scientists is misleading and destructive," said Nobel Laureate in Chemistry, Professor Thomas Cech, PhD, who is a founding Board Member of the *Society*.

In addition, "representing the 'Rock Stars of Science' as all men, which the 'real' rock stars of science are not, sends a horrible message to women and girls: that women can't reach the top and most flashy echelons of science. Unfortunately, this is the message that has been sent for centuries that women scientists fight every day of their lives. The biases—both intentional and unintentional—generated by images such as these, construct barriers to entrance of women into science and success once they are there," commented Professor Jo Handelsman, PhD, president of *RFS*.

"The individuals who were chosen are wonderful scientists, but in this day and age, when there are fabulous women scientists everywhere, there is simply no excuse for this kind of omission," added Carla Shatz, PhD, Director of Bio-X at Stanford University, and *RFS* Board Member.

"There is no shortage of outstanding women scientists, and it is inexcusable that none of them were included," said *Society* Board Member Professor Joseph Gall, PhD, of the Carnegie Institution.

"We are very troubled that distinguished women were excluded in the first round," said Mary Ann Liebert, founder of the *Society* and president of the publishing company that bears her name.

"Further, the lack of rectification when this omission was brought to the attention of the *Geoffrey Beene Gives Back Foundation* is incomprehensible. The *Beene Foundation* should have corrected this immediately," said Liebert, who had spoken directly with the *Foundation's* president in August. "And although our own mission is focused on women, we are equally concerned about the need to recognize science's broad cultural diversity as well."

The *Beene Foundation* has since put up some women's names on their website for the second round. "That's progress," said Liebert, "but deserving women needed to be included from the start. 'Next time' is not good enough."

### **About the *Rosalind Franklin Society***

The *Rosalind Franklin Society* recognizes, fosters, and makes known the important contributions of women in science. In so doing, the *Society* honors the achievements of the late Rosalind Franklin, who helped solve the structure of DNA. The Founding Board of the *Rosalind Franklin Society* is comprised of women and men who understand the importance of recognizing the work of prominent women scientists, foster greater opportunities for women in the life sciences and related disciplines and educate, by example, and encourage young generations of women who have this calling.

The "Not Next Time!" campaign is being developed with *Seidler Bernstein*, a Boston-based communications company focused on healthcare and life technology. The *Rosalind Franklin Society's* Annual Board Meeting will take place in New York City, November 17-18, 2009.

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