

EMBARGOED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 15, 2009

15th ANNUAL HEINZ AWARDS

RECIPIENT BACKGROUNDER

Ashok Gadgil, Ph.D., 58, Berkeley, California

Ashok Gadgil is the recipient of a \$100,000 Heinz Award for his work as a researcher, inventor and humanitarian. As the faculty senior scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Dr. Gadgil leads a group that works to understand airflow and the transport of pollutants in buildings. He has developed technologies that have led to greater product affordability, enhanced air and water quality, improved energy efficiency, reduced health risks and life-saving advances within the developing world.

Examples of his inventions include the UV Waterworks, an inexpensive and reliable water purification system suitable for rural villages and disaster relief. The device significantly reduces the risk of life-threatening diseases. He also has devised the Berkeley-Darfur cook stove for safer indoor use in Darfur, Sudan, as well as a filter to remove arsenic from groundwater, which in some developing countries is often present at toxic levels. The World Health Organization estimates that about two million people, mostly children, die each year in developing countries from diarrhea caused by contaminated water, and nearly a billion people lack access to drinkable water.

Dr. Gadgil is also a Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of California, Berkeley. In 2005, the UC, Berkeley chapter of Engineers for a Sustainable World persuaded Dr. Gadgil to create a class on designing low-cost, sustainable infrastructure projects in regions with scarce resources. This popular class, which encourages students to consider political and social factors in their engineering decisions, routinely exceeds enrollment.

Dr. Gadgil is featured in the documentary film *"Flow: For the Love of Water."* The film highlights the importance of water and depicts the battles between private industry and the public sector in bringing clean water to the world's people. His invention, which also is featured, produces 2.5 gallons of water for two cents and can be powered by a car battery. His earlier work is chronicled in the 1999 documentary film *"Me and Isaac Newton."*

Said Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation:

"If invention is the mother of necessity, then Dr. Gadgil has been one of the fathers of necessary and practical inventions that have had profound effects on people's lives. He has dedicated his life to finding affordable solutions to some basic but critical human needs. He invented the UV Waterworks to clean the water, a more efficient burning stove for the women in Darfur, and he saw a way to reduce arsenic in the drinking water by using coal ash. His combination of vision and practicality is extraordinary and his passion and dedication make him a truly deserving recipient of a Heinz Award."

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