

## The 16th Heinz Awards



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### **Leading Toxic Chemical Researcher Wins Prestigious Heinz Award Frederick vom Saal uncovered health problems linked to the chemical BPA.**

PITTSBURGH, September 21, 2010 – Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation today announced Frederick vom Saal, Ph.D., a globally distinguished researcher, as a recipient of a Heinz Award. Dr. vom Saal is acknowledged for uncovering health concerns of bisphenol A (BPA), a commonly used chemical ingredient in consumer products, at exposure levels that methods used in chemical risk assessment had previously predicted to be safe. His groundbreaking research findings have significantly impacted approaches used to study the health effects of environmental chemicals and public health policy. He currently lives in Columbia, Missouri.

The Heinz Awards, in their 16<sup>th</sup> year, honor Dr. vom Saal and nine other environmental innovators.

“In many cases, exposure to dangerous chemicals leading to adverse health conditions is preventable. Safeguards against health risks caused by BPA and other harmful chemicals are critical and advocating public policy reform to decrease the use of toxins and improve human health around the world is vital to humanity,” said Dr. vom Saal.

The Heinz Awards annually honor the late U.S. Senator John Heinz’s long-standing commitment to the environment. This year’s awards, totaling \$1 million, recognize individuals who are addressing global change caused by the impact of human activities and natural processes on the environment.

In 1997, Dr. vom Saal discovered that exposure to BPA at levels deemed safe by government regulatory agencies around the world was linked to extensive health problems. His findings and testimony about the chemical in the U.S., Canada, Europe and Japan led to Japanese industry voluntarily removing BPA from can linings and thermal receipt paper, France and Denmark regulating BPA in food-contact products and to Canada regulating BPA as a toxic chemical. In the U.S., legislation has been proposed in Congress to ban its use in children’s food and beverage containers and to develop alternative approaches for assessing the risk posed by such chemicals. Several major retailers, such as Babies “R” Us, have discontinued products manufactured with BPA. U.S. government agencies have committed \$30 million over the next two years to further study the health risks associated with BPA.

“Dr. vom Saal uncovered evidence that an everyday chemical is linked to serious health problems. His research has prompted policymakers and corporations to evaluate the toll BPA is having on our health,” Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation, said today.

Dr. vom Saal was the lead author of a consensus statement by an NIH panel that agreed after reviewing all of the research on BPA there is a “a high level of confidence that BPA is causing harm, particularly to infants.” BPA has been linked to hormone disruption, early puberty, breast and prostate cancer, behavioral problems, reproductive abnormalities, heart disease, diabetes and liver toxicity.

In addition to Dr. vom Saal, the 16<sup>th</sup> Heinz Awards are honoring the following individuals:

- **James Balog**, Extreme Ice Survey (Boulder, Colo.) *For his dramatic use of photography to document the devastation of global warming*
- **Terrence Collins, Ph.D.**, Carnegie Mellon University (Pittsburgh, Pa.) *For using “green chemistry” to detoxify hazardous chemicals and training the next generation of scientists*
- **Gretchen Daily, Ph.D.**, Stanford University and the Natural Capital Project (Stanford, Calif.) *For her achievements demonstrating the financial value of natural ecosystems*
- **Richard Feely, Ph.D.**, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory (Seattle, Wash.) *For his extraordinary efforts to identify ocean acidity as global warming’s “evil twin”*
- **Cary Fowler, Ph.D.**, Global Crop Diversity Trust (Rome, Italy) *For establishing the Global Seed Vault to conserve genetic diversity of the world’s food plants despite climate change*
- **Lynn Goldman, M.D.**, George Washington University (Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Md.) *For promoting regulation of dangerous chemicals and expanding citizens’ right to know about pollution in their communities*
- **Elizabeth Kolbert**, *The New Yorker*, (Williamstown, Mass.) *For her groundbreaking environmental journalism and devotion to informing readers*
- **Michael Oppenheimer, Ph.D.**, Princeton University (Princeton, N.J. and New York, N.Y.) *For assessing the impacts of global warming and air pollution, and working for policies to prevent future harm*
- **Daniel Sperling, Ph.D.**, University of California, Davis (Davis, Calif.) *For advancing sustainable transportation policies and accelerating the transition to low-carbon alternative fuels nationwide*

### **About the Heinz Awards**

The Heinz Family Foundation, one of the Heinz Family Philanthropies, began as a charitable trust established by the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. His widow, Teresa Heinz, established the Heinz Awards in 1993 to honor and sustain the legacy of her late husband.

Nominations for the Heinz Awards are submitted by invited experts, who serve anonymously. Award recipients are selected by the board of directors for the Heinz Awards upon recommendation by a blue-ribbon panel of jurors.

In addition to the \$100,000 award for their unrestricted use, recipients are presented with a medallion inscribed with the image of Senator Heinz on one side and a rendering of a globe passing between two hands on the other.

The Heinz Awards will be presented at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. on November 15.

For more information about the Heinz Awards, Heinz Family Foundation or the recipients, visit [www.heinzawards.net](http://www.heinzawards.net).