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**‘Biomimicry’ Expert Receives Prestigious Heinz Award  
Janine Benyus Inspires Us to Look to Nature’s Engineering for Solutions**

PITTSBURGH, September 13, 2011 – Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation today announced Janine Benyus, an innovator in the field of biomimicry, as a recipient of a \$100,000 Heinz Award. Ms. Benyus is the visionary co-founder of Biomimicry 3.8, formed by integrating The Biomimicry Institute and The Biomimicry Guild, which she co-founded in 1998. She is based in Missoula, Mont.

Biomimicry 3.8 brings together scientists, engineers, architects and other innovators to create sustainable technologies and business practices. The organization achieves this through a global network of experts providing education, professional training, research, analysis and consultation to individuals, institutions and corporations.

“Janine Benyus’ work on biomimicry has been a catalyst for many innovations that emulate nature’s processes and have been used in research, design and manufacturing,” Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation, said today. “She shows us that the solutions to many of our biggest challenges are right there in front of us in nature’s vast reservoir of ideas.”

Now in their 17th year, the Heinz Awards honor visionaries who have made extraordinary contributions to the environment, a life-long area of commitment for the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. Ms. Benyus and nine others are recognized for their significant efforts benefitting the environment. This year’s awards total \$900,000.

With the publication of her book *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature*, Ms. Benyus introduced a broad audience to the concept of looking at how nature works for breakthrough ideas to improve products and manufacturing methods. The Biomimicry Institute created a groundbreaking database called [Ask Nature](#), which contains nature’s answers to many complex design challenges. Visitors can see how organisms filter air and water, gather solar energy and create non-toxic dyes and glues. An example of biomimicry featured on AskNature is Biomatrix’s refrigeration-free way to preserve vaccines and other biologicals, modeled on the tiny brine shrimp.

While biomimicry has existed as a tool in fields such as chemistry for years, as a methodology it had not crossed over into other disciplines, nor taken on a larger role with regard to how it could impact environmental stewardship, which is at the heart of Ms. Benyus’ vision.

Ms. Benyus co-founded the Biomimicry Guild, whose in-house biologists have provided consulting services in design, manufacturing, and management to hundreds of corporations, universities, design groups, architectural firms and non-profit organizations including GE,

Boeing, Interface, Inc., Procter & Gamble, IDEO, Nike, Levi's, HOK, General Mills, and Seventh Generation.

“If you want to find the most brilliant engineers in the world, you need to look at the results of 3.8 billion years of evolution. Native organisms and ecosystems have the best track record for well-adapted designs that fix vexing problems,” said Ms. Benyus. “This tremendous honor from the Heinz Family Foundation comes at a pivotal time, allowing me to write my next book – a deep dive into nature’s ubiquitous designs and core principles.”

In addition to Ms. Benyus, the 17<sup>th</sup> Heinz Awards are honoring the following individuals:

- **John Luther Adams**, Independent Composer (Fairbanks, Alaska) *For his musical compositions that invite us to hear the whole world as music*
- **Richard Alley, Ph.D.**, The Pennsylvania State University (University Park, Pa.) *For his polar ice discoveries that showed abrupt climate change is possible and for engaging his students, policymakers and the public*
- **Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis**, Wicked Delicate Films, Truck Farm and FoodCorps (Brooklyn, N.Y.) *For using humor and innovative programming to engage people about sustainable food*
- **Louis J. Guillette, Jr., Ph. D.**, Medical University of South Carolina (Charleston, S.C.) *For being a leader in the field of hormone disruption and the impact chemicals have on wildlife*
- **Joan Kleypas, Ph.D.**, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Institute for the Study of Society and Environment (Boulder, Colo.) *For conducting breakthrough research on the impacts of environmental change on coral reefs and engaging both scientists and policymakers*
- **Nancy Knowlton, Ph.D.**, National Museum of Natural History (Washington, D.C.) *For broadening the understanding of ocean biodiversity and the impacts of humans on marine life*
- **Nancy Rabalais, Ph.D.**, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (Chauvin, La.) *For her pioneering research of severe oxygen depletion in the Gulf of Mexico and commitment to reduce water pollution through education and public policy*
- **Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D.**, Ithaca College, (Ithaca, N.Y.) *For highlighting the link between toxic chemicals and diseases through her written work, as well engaging the public as a cancer survivor*

**About the Heinz Awards**

The Heinz Awards annually recognize individuals creating and implementing workable solutions to the problems the world faces through invention, research and education while inspiring the next generation of modern thinkers. While this year the awards focus singularly on the

environment, winners were chosen who address the intersection of the environment with one of the other Award categories recognized in many previous years, including arts and humanities, human condition, public policy, technology and the economy.

The Heinz Family Foundation 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 or the recipients, including photographs, visit [www.heinzawards.net](http://www.heinzawards.net).

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