



**From a Scientist Protecting Our Fresh Waters From Microplastic Pollution,  
to the Leader of a Global Nonprofit Fostering Entrepreneurship in  
Developing Countries, 23rd Heinz Awards Honors Six Americans  
Changing the World for Good**

*Heinz Family Foundation announces \$1.5 million in awards*

**PITTSBURGH, September 18, 2018**—The Heinz Family Foundation today announced the recipients of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Heinz Awards, which will present unrestricted cash awards totaling \$1.5 million to six Americans whose passion for identifying issues critical to people and the planet is matched by their spirited innovation and determination to address and solve those challenges:

- Norman Atkins, an educator whose bold new models for preparing, equipping and training teachers and school leaders is effecting dramatic, positive change in public school classrooms and increasing teacher diversity;
- Ming Kuo, Ph.D., a psychologist whose research on the impact of urban green space on physical and mental health is changing urban forest and landscape design policy;
- Ralph Lemon, a choreographer, writer, visual artist and curator whose richly moving body of work interweaves movement, media, visual arts and language;
- Sherri Mason, Ph.D., a global expert on freshwater microplastic pollution whose research is raising awareness of microplastics, microfibers and other contaminants in U.S. freshwater systems, leading to worldwide policy change;
- Linda Rottenberg, a social entrepreneur whose global nonprofit is opening doors of economic opportunity for business owners in developing countries and in the U.S.;
- Enric Sala, Ph.D., a marine ecologist working at the intersection of science and policy to protect the world's last pristine marine environments.

As part of the accolade, each recipient will receive an unrestricted cash award of \$250,000.

“This year’s awardees are exemplary for well-documented achievements in their area of discipline, but more importantly, they have demonstrated an unwavering determination to create change, to foster good and to inspire new thinking, regardless of obstacles,” said Teresa Heinz, Chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation. “Each has taken their talents, the opportunities they have had to learn and study and achieve, and channeled these gifts into a life’s work that is making a better, more sustainable world for us and our children. They are an inspiration to us all, and a reminder of humankind’s capacity for good.”

Created to honor the memory of the late U.S. Senator John Heinz, and now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year, the Heinz Awards program recognizes remarkable contributions in five areas of great importance to Senator Heinz: Arts and Humanities; Environment; Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy and Employment. This year’s recipients by category are:

- **Arts and Humanities: Ralph Lemon, New York, New York**

The Heinz Awards recognizes multidisciplinary artist Ralph Lemon for his extensive body of innovative work that redefines the conventions of dance, and visual and performance art. An artist working at the forefront of contemporary dance for many years, Mr. Lemon integrates choreography known for intense physicality and emotion, together with theater, drawing, film, writing and ethnography. Over his career, he has created distinctive works for numerous dance companies and collaborated with noted musicians and artists, crafting powerful, multifaceted performance pieces that explore stories of race, identity, spirituality and heritage. Described as fierce, emotionally fraught and dazzling in its intensity, his broad spectrum of work and evolving artistic legacy continue to influence the current and next generation of choreographers and artists.

- **Environment: Ming Kuo, Ph.D., Urbana, Illinois**

The Heinz Awards recognizes environmental psychologist Dr. Ming Kuo for her work studying the impacts of natural green spaces in urban environments on human social and behavioral health, and children's cognitive development. Dr. Kuo's work has documented and empirically solidified the psychological, social and physical benefits of green spaces and nature experiences among vulnerable populations, and linked healthy urban green spaces to stronger and safer neighborhoods, reduced aggression and crime, and reduced ADHD symptoms. Her rigorous studies have shaped environmental psychology into the vibrant and growing field it is today, and her findings are having national and international impacts on environmental policy, urban forestry programs and federal landscaping guidelines.

- **Human Condition: Norman Atkins, New York, New York**

The Heinz Awards recognizes Norman Atkins for challenging long-standing education and teacher training methodologies with fresh thinking that is empowering and equipping teachers and school leaders for the classrooms of today, as well as fostering academic achievement and excellence among students in low-income communities. Believing that there is a disconnect between what education schools are teaching and what teachers need to know to be successful in managing their classrooms, Mr. Atkins co-founded the Relay Graduate School of Education, referring to the idea that it takes a relay of highly effective teachers to put a child on a positive academic and life trajectory. The Relay approach combines education theory with content knowledge and practice-based skills, and relies on excellent current and former classroom teachers and principals to provide training in effective classroom management. This past school year, Relay trained 3,000 current and aspiring teachers and 750 school leaders nationwide.

- **Public Policy: Sherri Mason, Ph.D., Fredonia, New York**

The Heinz Awards recognizes Dr. Sherri Mason for her groundbreaking research identifying high concentrations of microplastics in freshwater systems in the U.S., resulting in state, national and international policy change. Her work has raised public awareness of the threats posed by microplastics in the Great Lakes, the largest freshwater system in the world. Her findings, which estimated that 11 billion microbeads were being released into the nation's waterways each day, led to the passage of state measures banning microbeads and the enactment of the federal Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015. Dr. Mason's research has identified microplastics in treated drinking water, sea salt and bottled water, prompting a review by the World Health Organization, and her work has expanded to include discovery of other non-biodegradable materials that are introducing chemical contaminants into water supplies and the Great Lakes food chain, including synthetic fibers that are shed when fleece items are laundered.

- **Public Policy: Enric Sala, Ph.D., Washington, D.C.**

The Heinz Awards recognizes marine ecologist Dr. Enric Sala for his worldwide efforts to explore, research and protect the remaining pristine ocean places. Dr. Sala has been instrumental in the creation of a model that is being used to establish large marine protected areas (MPAs) worldwide, such as the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument in the United States, the Revillagigedo National Park in Mexico, and the Pitcairn Islands Marine Reserve in the South Pacific. The creation of these reserves allows for the conservation and restoration of marine life. Many of the sites Dr. Sala and his National Geographic Pristine Seas team explored and documented are now under protection, including four marine parks in Chile covering 850,000 square kilometers of ocean territory. His efforts in Ecuador contributed to the establishment of a no-take marine sanctuary around the Galápagos Islands of Darwin and Wolf, described as one of the most spectacular and significant marine ecosystems on the planet.

- **Technology, the Economy and Employment: Linda Rottenberg, New York, New York**

The Heinz Awards recognizes Linda Rottenberg for her visionary leadership of the global nonprofit Endeavor, a new kind of organization that she co-founded to create opportunities for entrepreneurship and support young companies in emerging economies around the world. Believing that supporting high-impact entrepreneurs is the best way to create jobs and stimulate growth, Endeavor helps business owners in those countries access the local networks, training and mentorship they need to rapidly grow their companies and create regional jobs. Under Ms. Rottenberg's leadership, Endeavor, which invests no money itself and takes no equity, has overseen launches in 30 countries, including chapters in South America, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and Asia, as well as the United States. Her organization has supported over 2,000 entrepreneurs from more than 1,000 companies, collectively creating an estimated 1.5 million jobs in the areas of healthcare, technology, media, finance, industry, and consumer goods and services.

Winners of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Heinz Awards will be honored in Pittsburgh on October 24, 2018.

To date, the Heinz Awards has recognized 139 individuals and awarded more than \$27.5 million to the honorees. This year's award total is \$1.5 million. For more information on the awardees, visit [www.heinzawards.net/2018](http://www.heinzawards.net/2018).

EDITORS/REPORTERS: To obtain photos of the recipients, please contact Abby Manishor at [amanishor@burness.com](mailto:amanishor@burness.com) or 917-539-3308.

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### **About the Heinz Awards**

Established by Teresa Heinz in 1993 to honor the memory of her late husband, U.S. Senator John Heinz, the Heinz Awards celebrates the accomplishments and spirit of the Senator by recognizing the extraordinary achievements of individuals in the areas of greatest importance to him. The awards, administered by the Heinz Family Foundation, recognize individuals for their contributions in the areas of Arts and Humanities; Environment; Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy and Employment. Nominations are submitted by invited experts, who serve anonymously, and are reviewed

Heinz Awards News Release – p. 4

by jurors appointed by the Heinz Family Foundation. The jurors make recommendations to the Board of Directors, which subsequently selects the Award recipients. For more information on the Heinz Awards, visit [www.heinzawards.net](http://www.heinzawards.net).

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