

## Q&A

# If you could trade places with someone for a day, who would it be?

*Scientists are a curious bunch, and how better to satisfy curiosity about the world than glimpse things from someone else's perspective? Four HHMI scientists offer their picks on how they'd spend a day in another person's shoes.*

— EDITED BY SARAH C.P. WILLIAMS



**Leslie A. Leinwand**  
HHMI PROFESSOR  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
AT BOULDER

“My top pick is Alice Waters, the chef and co-owner of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California. Alice Waters champions the use of local, just-picked ingredients and appears to have a generous spirit. My first meal at Chez Panisse was a revelation; like nothing else I had ever eaten. Her food appears simple, but has layers of complex tastes and textures. Since I can't actually be her for a day, I'd sure like to be able to spend a day with her in the kitchen.”



**Alejandro Sánchez Alvarado**  
HHMI INVESTIGATOR  
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH SCHOOL  
OF MEDICINE

“I'd love to trade places for a day with either of my two children. As a father and a scientist, I am often struck by the genuine, unencumbered, and fresh ways my children see and question the world around them. From the mundane—Where do dreams come from?—to the mysterious—What's outside of outer space? My children's natural interrogation of their world is always a fresh reminder of why I fell in love with science in the first place.”



**Elaine Fuchs**  
HHMI INVESTIGATOR  
THE ROCKEFELLER  
UNIVERSITY

“It would have to be the Flemish painter Pieter Bruegel on the day he finished *The Triumph of Death*, which now hangs in the Prado museum in Madrid. My introduction to Bruegel came when I was 6 years old and became fascinated by a reproduction of one of his paintings in my uncle's home. As I got older and learned to appreciate art, I became passionate about seeing Bruegel's paintings whenever and wherever I had the chance. My favorite is the masterpiece in the Prado, although *The Beggars* and *The Fall of Icarus* are also right up there. What a creative genius Bruegel was, whose pulse was on sixteenth century Europe in a unique and extraordinary way!”



**David J. Anderson**  
HHMI INVESTIGATOR  
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY

“Jonathan Miller, the British humorist, neurologist, writer, and theater director. There's nobody else I know who has so successfully combined an interest in science/medicine and the performing arts. During a day in Miller's shoes, I'd meet lots of interesting, talented people in fields I would normally never encounter. And I'd exercise the right half of my brain, the part that tends to atrophy during a career in science.”