

MAY 07, 2009

American Philosophical Society Honors HHMI Scientists and Board Members

HHMI President Robert Tjian, HHMI Trustee Alison F. Richard, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, HHMI investigator Craig C. Mello of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, and HHMI Medical Advisory Board member Rowena G. Matthews of the University of Michigan, have been elected to the American Philosophical Society, the oldest learned society in the United States.

An eminent scholarly organization, the American Philosophical Society was founded in 1743 by Benjamin Franklin to promote useful knowledge in the sciences and humanities. It carries out that mandate by supporting excellence in scholarly research, professional meetings, publications, library resources, and community outreach. The Society has played an important role in American cultural and intellectual life for more than 250 years.

The American Philosophical Society's current activities reflect the founder's spirit of inquiry, provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas, and convey the conviction of its members that intellectual inquiry and critical thought are inherently in the public interest.

Early members of the Society included George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, James Madison, and John Marshall. In the nineteenth century, John James Audubon, Robert Fulton, Charles Darwin, Thomas Edison, and Louis Pasteur were among those elected. Albert Einstein, Robert Frost, and George Marshall hint at the scientific, humanistic, and public accomplishments of twentieth-century members.

Today the Society has 987 elected members, 821 resident members and 166 international members from more than two dozen foreign countries.