

The IMSA Great Minds Program®

The IMSA Great Minds Program® at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy presented A Book Launch.

This event featured profiled scientist and dinosaur hunter [Paul Sereno](#), political journalist with the New York Times, [Claudia Dreifus](#), IMSA's Resident Scholar, [Leon Lederman](#), Director of Student Inquiry, Judith Scheppler, and Student Authors

Where: IMSA, Auditorium

When: November 14, 2001

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

What: Panel discussion on Science Literacy

Reception and Book signing to follow

"Scientists say the darndest things to high school students! With enthusiasm and fresh spirit, the young writers relay inspiring stories, charming comments, and gentle advice. These short biographies sparkle."

- Dr. Margaret Geller, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Cambridge, MA

"Portraits indeed, of creation and discovery, beautifully painted in the words of talented young writers."

- Dr. Roald Hoffman, Nobel Laureate, Professor, Department of Chemistry, Cornell University

"What a great idea for a book! Great scientists of today are profiled by the great scientists of tomorrow, and the enthusiasm and excitement are infectious."

- Dr. James Trefil, Clarence J. Robinson, Professor of Physics, George Mason University and co-author of Dictionary of Cultural Literacy.

"The genius of Leon Lederman and his young assistants, Illinois' brightest aspiring scientists, is at work. The lives of some of today's greatest and most inspiring scientists are brought to life through the eyes of the generation of future scientists, they are [inspiring]. It works brilliantly-even for an old scientist like me!"

- Dr. Michael S. Turner, Cosmologist and Chair of the University of Chicago Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics

"This book is a joy to read. The scientists, of course, are interesting people but it's the students' worldviews that show through the essays that gives this book its special flavor."

- Gerald Wheeler, Executive Director, National Science Teachers Association

Summary:

How does a person become a scientist? What special talents, aptitudes, and qualities of character, are needed? Why is science important and how should it be used by society?

There is no better way to learn about scientists and the whole scientific enterprise than by talking to scientists themselves.

These fifteen biographies, written by promising young students from the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, reveal the many interesting human factors that influenced the lives of successful scientists: how they chose their individual career paths, what obstacles they had to overcome along the way, and where they think science will lead society in the future. They also convey the excitement of discovery that both these established scientists and their young biographers share as they explore their particular scientific interests.

The various biographies cover a wide range of fascinating personalities and their disciplines: Clifford Geertz (cultural anthropology), Mary Claire-King (genetics), Marvin Minsky (artificial intelligence), Story Musgrave and Sally Ride (astronautics), Steven Pinker (psychology/cognitive science), F. Sherwood Rowland (chemistry), Vera Rubin (astronomy), Paul Sereno (paleontology), George Smoot (astrophysics), Charles Townes and Edward Witten (physics), Geerat Vermeij (geology), E. O. Wilson (sociobiology), and Dawn Wright (oceanography).

This exciting project, directed by Nobel Prize-winning physicist Leon M. Lederman, is especially welcome at a time when there is widespread concern about the declining level of scientific literacy among Americans. Truly fascinating in content and presentation, these inspiring biographies show that science is a many-faceted and thrilling voyage of discovery.

Leon M Lederman, Ph.D. won the Nobel Prize in physics in 1988. He is the Resident Scholar of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, director emeritus of the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Pritzker Professor of Science at the Illinois Institute of Technology, and the author of the highly acclaimed *The God Particle*.

Judith A. Scheppler, Ph.D. is the Coordinator of Student Inquiry and Director of the Grainger Center for Imagination and Inquiry at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. She is also the co-author of *Biotechnology Explorations: Applying the Fundamentals*.

PAGES: 305 pp. COMMENTS: (illustrations throughout) ISBN: 1-57392-932-8 BINDING: cloth PRICE: \$28 SIZE: 6 x 9 CATEGORY: Popular Science