

PRESS RELEASE

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WINNER OF *CARL SAGAN PRIZE FOR SCIENCE POPULARIZATION* ANNOUNCED

SAN FRANCISCO — Wonderfest, the 20-year-old Bay Area Beacon of Science, announced today that biochemist Dr. Jennifer A. Doudna has won the 2017 *Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization*.

The prize, funded by Aduro Biotech, is presented specifically to recognize and encourage researchers who “have contributed mightily to the public understanding and appreciation of science.” Past Sagan Prize winners include Stanford neuroscientist Robert Sapolsky, SETI Institute astronomer Jill Tarter, and Nobel Laureate biochemist Paul Berg. The prize includes a \$5000 cash award.

“Wonderfest was born in 1997, just a few months after the death of researcher and popularizer Carl Sagan,” notes the organization’s founding executive director, Tucker Hiatt. “Wonderfest’s work has been dedicated to Sagan’s memory ever since. Sagan would be proud to know that Jennifer Doudna, so renowned for her research and her outreach, has received Wonderfest’s Sagan Prize for 2017.”

Wonderfest is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to informal science education and popularization, particularly among adults in the San Francisco Bay Area. Several times every month, Wonderfest produces in-person science events — and their online videos — in an effort to “enlarge the concept of scientific community.” Wonderfest also produces “Science Envoy” workshops to develop the science communication skills of Bay Area PhD students.

Doudna is Professor of Chemistry and of Molecular & Cell Biology at the University of California, Berkeley. She holds a degree in biochemistry from Pomona College, and a PhD in biological chemistry and molecular pharmacology from Harvard Medical School.

Doudna is globally known for her discovery and development of the CRISPR/Cas9 gene editing system which the New York Times says has “revolutionized humans’ ability to edit DNA,” allowing genetic changes that can be passed on to future generations.

Doudna has written over 200 research articles, and has received many prestigious awards including the Breakthrough Prize, the Nakasone Award, and the Japan Prize. Her numerous and rich science popularization efforts include a TED talk, RadioLab and Science Friday interviews, and a best-selling book: 2017’s *A Crack in Creation: Gene Editing and the Unthinkable Power to Control Evolution*.

Additional information: <http://wonderfest.org/sagan-prize>

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