



AWARDS

Innovator Award Recipients

This award is given to an individual, organization or corporation that has significantly impacted the world community in such a way as to make it a better place in which to live.

2020 – Luis von Ahn, pioneer of crowdsourcing, founder of the company reCAPTCHA, co-founder of Duolingo—one of the world’s most popular language-learning platforms.

2014 – The Mayo Clinic, Dr Doug Wood from the Center for Innovation. The Mayo Clinic has been dedicated to serving humanity through hope and healing, including making significant, innovative contributions in the fields of medicine and science that have transformed the healthcare industry, for an astounding 150 years. As an organization that “thinks big, starts small and moves fast,” the Mayo Clinic recognizes and stresses the need for invaluable 21st century skills, including collaboration, communication, teamwork, and building on one another’s ideas, to create technological innovations that will not only continue to advance medical science, but will inspire hope and empower millions of people around the world.

2013 – National Geographic, presented to the National Geographic Society and accepted by Melina Bellows, the Executive Vice President and Chief Creative Officer of Books, Kids and Family at National Geographic, DI recognized the organization as a pioneer in encouraging stewardship of our planet through research, exploration and education for 125 years.

2012 – NASA, presented to NASA and accepted by Dr. Roosevelt Johnson, Deputy Associate Administrator for Education, in recognition that NASA has been positively influencing learners for generations.

2009-11 – Award was not given out

2008 – Senator Howard Baker and the Baker Center for Public Policy

2006 – The 3M Company, in recognition of outstanding creativity that has transformed the world in which we live

2005 – Donald J. Treffinger, President of the Center for Creative Learning, internationally known author, researcher and educator whose work in the field of creativity and problem solving has been adopted by thousands throughout the world.

2004 – Kristen Morahan Jerger, a DI Alumna, holds both national and international patents for the design of an ultrasonic surgical aspirator used in the removal of brain tumors as well as for designs involving argon-enhanced electrosurgery.

2003 – Adrian Fisher, the world’s leading maze designer who has been creating mazes internationally for the past twenty-one years.

2001 – Velcro USA, for its original development of “hook and loop” or “touch fasteners.”

2000 – Arthur Ganson, who has for years delighted people with his whimsical machines and mechanical sculptures.

1999 – Joan Ganz Cooney, Co-founder of the Children’s Television Workshop and Sesame Street.

1998 – John R. Costanza, President, CEO and founder of the Costanza Institute of Technology and “Demand Flow” technology.

1997 – Jerome H. Lemelson, America’s Master Inventor who held more patents, over 500, than anyone in the world.

1996 – Bill Lishman, “Father Goose,” world-renowned sculptor who is best known for his research with Canadian geese regarding their “imprinting process” and “migration routes.”

1995 – Dr. Marv Creamer, best known for his trip around the world in his thirty-six-foot Globe Star sailboat and six transatlantic crossings.

1993 – Chuck Francis, IBM Corporate Director of Advertising who directed the company’s international activities in television.

1991 – Ann Lewin, creator of the Capital Children’s Museum in Washington, DC.

1990 – NASA, for firing the imagination of the young and reaching directly into the classroom through continuing outreach efforts with projects such as the Space Science Student Involvement Program.

1989 – Chuck Jones, whose creative efforts led to the creation of the cartoon characters, Bugs Bunny, Road Runner and Coyote, Pepe le Pew, Daffy Duck, Elmer Fudd, and Porky Pig.

1988 – The MacArthur Foundation widely recognized for its support of creative individuals and projects.

1987 – Dr. Sidney Parnes, Professor Emeritus of Creative Studies at the State University at Buffalo and Chairman of the Board of the Creative Education Foundation. Dr. Parnes has been best known for his wide variety of management and creativity workshops, seminars and institutes both within the United States and abroad.

1986 – Dr. Paul B. MacCready, for his remarkable achievement in human-powered flight, most notably the Gossamer Condor, the first human-powered flight to fly in a prescribed course.

1985 – Walter Elias Disney, posthumously presented to one of the most creative individuals the world has ever known and the creation of Mickey Mouse and many animated classic films.

1985 – The Walt Disney World Company, for their continued work in making millions of children throughout the world happy.

Thomas Camerlo Award

This award is presented by the Board of Trustees to a Corporation, or an individual representing a Corporation, that has gone above and beyond a normal sponsorship relationship in providing outstanding service to Destination Imagination Inc.

2009 – Tom Camerlo

2010 – Barbara Kaufman – 3M

2011 – Robert Gibbs and UT Staff

2013 – Valerie Conroy – Posthumously

2014 – Pete Sandford, NXLevel Solutions

Diamond Award Recipients

This award is presented by the Board of Trustees to an individual or team who has given significant assistance or long-time service to Destination Imagination in a way that has significantly impacted the organization.

2013 – Andy Loftis, Lynn Macy, Al Simons, Fritz Schwenk, Ben Thomas, Larry Gensch, Susie Rodgers

2014 – Pat Schoonover, Nancy Wingenbach, Reggie Bunis, Charles Compton, Dick Pinney, Faith Garriock

2015 – Judy Roberts

2016 – Frank Begun, Cozy Dorton

2017 – Brownie Mitchell, Roger Garriock, Sheila Swanson

2019 – Karen Anderson, David Thomason, Steve Greenwood, Johannah Nikula, Dan Henderson, Debi Tipton, Connie Ackerman

2020 – Pamela Schroeder, Sherry Gordon-Shulik, Barbara Mann

DI Board of Trustees Spirit of DI Exceptional Service Award

2014 – Dee and Bruce Urban, Charles Bowler, Chris Groberg, Faith Garriock, Wayne Kurtzman, Fritz Schwenk, Al Simons, Eric Wolf, Susan Oclassen, Jose Luna, Jill Schoonmaker

2015 – Beth Hammer, Curtis McKenzie, Nancy Webb, Mary Jane Campbell, Jerry Kuhn, Li Xiao, Joan Hladky, Frank Begun, Chrissy Buhr, Eric Bennett, Randy Thornton, Ben White, Patti Cornell, Beverly Webb, Carmen Zeisler, Mary Ann Schill, Lucy Her Many Horses

2016 – Sue Brailey, Virginia Cox, David Lewis, Ryan Huber, Fred Shippey, Judy Dadah, Anne Fishkin, Annette Rogers, Sherry Haueter, Sue Schrader, Michael Howard, Arlene Cohen, Stephen Thompson, Ande Axelrod, Sally Borkovetz

2017 – Jim Hanna, Craig Richardson, Kenan Sener, Annette Rogers, Joan Turek, Amanda Connors, Gayle Bragg, Barb Besal, Lois Spencer, Kathy O'Holleran, Susan LaFlame, Chamkaur Cheema

2018 – Bernie Barhorst, Brian Dickman, Shelly Larkin, Rich Polley, Jude Porth, Renata Woodland

2019 – Brant Wood, Eric Dahl, Jim Schettler, Gary Gaitlin (posthumously), Steve Donley, Pasquale DiLego

Icon Award

2019 – Chris Colfer, actor and writer

2021 – Andrew Berry, American football executive

2023 – Daniel Scheinert, writer and director