



2022 Alumni Awards

AND TRIBUTE TO LEON LEDERMAN

Friday, October 21, 2022

PROGRAM

Opening	Val Castellanos '23, Bhavya Vegesna '23
Welcome	Dr. Comfort Akwaji-Anderson <i>Principal and Chief Academic Officer</i>
Tribute to Leon Lederman	Dr. Erin Roche '89 <i>Board of Trustees President*</i>
Musical Performance	“Robin Hood Changes His Oil” by Gideon Freudmann <i>performed by Jason Qin - Cello 1, Daniel Park - Cello 2, Annabelle Zhang - Cello 3, Sophie “Soap” Pehlke - Cello 3, Avyay Duggirala - Cello 4, and Emma Lau - Cello 5</i>
2022 Alumni Awards	Dr. Evan Glazer <i>IMSA President</i>
Closing	Hosts
Recession	“A Halloween Thriller” by Rod Temperton, Johann Sebastian Bach and Modest Mussorgsky, Arr. Ralph Ford <i>performed by the Chamber Strings</i>

**Through the generosity of The Cathy Veal Endowment for Board of Trustees Alumni Award established with the IMSA Fund, we are able to host this program and bring our recipients to IMSA from around the world.*

ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS

TRAILBLAZER AWARD

Joseph W. Turek, M.D., Ph.D., MBA '90

Dr. Joseph W. Turek, MD, Ph.D., MBA is an academic pediatric cardiac surgeon at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. Since 2017, Dr. Turek has served as chief of pediatric cardiac surgery and executive co-director of Duke Children's Pediatric & Congenital Heart Center. Prior to Duke, he served in a similar leadership role at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital from 2012-2017.

A native of Petersburg, Illinois, Dr. Turek attended IMSA in the second graduating class. He then graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in biochemistry and received his M.D./Ph.D. (pharmacology) from the University of Illinois in Chicago with Alpha Omega Alpha distinction. He completed his general surgery education at Duke University, where he also finished a cardiothoracic surgery residency. During this time, he served as a visiting congenital heart surgery fellow at Texas Children's Hospital. Dr. Turek completed a congenital cardiac surgery fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in 2011. He received his MBA with a concentration in Health Sector Management from Duke's Fuqua School of Business in 2020.

Board certified in general surgery, thoracic surgery, and congenital cardiac surgery, Dr. Turek has been one of the foremost innovators of the last decade in congenital heart surgery, developing novel operations, modifying techniques, and introducing new products and procedures to children and adults with congenital cardiac disease. Most notably, he performed the world's first co-transplant of a heart and cultured thymus tissue in an operation that could usher in an era in which solid organ transplant recipients can develop tolerance to their newly transplanted organ, recognizing them as “self”. In another highly innovative operation, he performed the world's first partial heart transplant for a newborn without functioning aortic or pulmonary valves, maintaining the growth capacity of the newly implanted valves. Additionally, he led the team at Duke in completing the nation's first pediatric donation after a circulatory death heart transplant with ex vivo reanimation as a means to expand the already limited donor pool of available organs. His clinical passion and expertise lies in high-complexity neonatal heart surgery.

Academically, Dr. Turek has published over 150 peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters. He maintains an active and well-funded research laboratory with projects spanning from basic science to translational to clinical research, in areas such as heart transplantation tolerance, living root transplantation, miniaturized ventricular assist devices, Marfan syndrome, and the role of alpha-gal sensitization in biologic valve degradation. He maintains active leadership roles in national and international cardiothoracic surgery societies.





DISTINGUISHED LEADER AWARD

Sona Nadenichek Golder, Ph.D. '89

Sona N. Golder, Ph.D. currently holds dual appointments as a professor in the Department of Political Science at The Pennsylvania State University and a professor in the Department of Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen. She has distinguished herself in research, scholarship, teaching, grant activity, publications, and professional service in the field of Political Science.

Dr. Golder's publications illustrate her commitment to advancing the field of Political Science through both research and teaching. Notably, Dr. Golder has published two important and well-regarded textbooks, *Principles of Comparative Politics* and *Foundations of Comparative Politics*, that show students how to take a scientific approach to answer core questions in comparative politics, rather than the standard approach of describing political institutions in a handful of countries around the world.

Dr. Golder has been awarded over four million dollars in external and internal grants, received the MacCracken Fellowship, and won the Brian Barry Prize from the British Academy for excellence in Political Science scholarship.

Dr. Golder's excellence extends to exemplary service and mentoring in higher education. At Penn State, she chairs the College of Liberal Arts Promotion & Tenure Committee. She has served on over 15 doctoral committees and 5 Master's committees. She continues to serve as a mentor for numerous graduate students and junior faculty who are women and people of color. Dr. Golder also served for several years as the lead editor of one of the discipline's leading general journals, the *British Journal of Political Science*, and as an editor of the *Politics of Institutions* Book Series published by Oxford University Press.

Dr. Golder also has developed and taught ten different courses in Political Science, including methods courses on Game Theory and Quantitative Analysis as well as substantive courses on Comparative Politics, European Politics, and Executive-Legislative Relations. As a leader in her field, Dr. Golder expands our knowledge and understanding of political institutions and behavior in advanced industrialized democracies. Using advanced quantitative methods to explain and critique international political processes, Dr. Golder is an amazing representation of what IMSA looks like 30+ years later, and how IMSA alumni continue to gravitate towards foundational knowledge of STEM, liberal arts, and social sciences to have an impact on the world through research, teaching, and service.



TITAN AWARD

Robert M. Chang '89

Robert Chang is the CEO and Founder of Sidetime, a SaaS platform enabling access to mentorship and expertise for all. He is also President of TenSky Entertainment and has held previous leadership roles at the intersection of innovation, access, and social impact at venture-backed firms, Fortune 50 companies, and leading nonprofit institutions. He also currently serves as a board director and secretary at Vibrant Emotional Health, launching 988 nationwide, and the Chinatown Health Clinic Foundation leads Blue Titan Ventures as an early-stage venture capital investor supporting IMSA alumni, advises early-stage healthcare and technology companies, and produces award-winning independent narrative and documentary feature films that have premiered at Sundance and SXSW. Robert graduated as a charter class member of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) and received a BA from the University of Chicago, and an MBA from the Yale School of Management.



TITAN AWARD

Jasmine Kwasa, Ph.D. '09

Jasmine Kwasa, Ph.D., is a National Institutes of Health post-doctoral fellow and Special Faculty at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). Originally from the south side of Chicago, Jasmine developed a passion for creating outreach, access, and exposure opportunities for underrepresented groups at IMSA after she attended EXCEL. Graduating in 2009, she went on to study biomedical and electrical engineering at Washington University in St. Louis on a full ride as an Ervin Scholar, and went on to earn her M.S. and Ph.D. from Boston University and CMU, respectively. Her dissertation focused on the cognitive neuroscience of attention in young adults with ADHD using electroencephalography (EEG) and signal processing. During her schooling, she created and maintained several leadership roles in outreach/exposure activities serving Black and Brown students through the National Society of Black Engineers, the Clinton Global Initiative, and an independent non-profit for which she served as National Director, the E³ Mentoring Program.

As a post-doctoral fellow and lead engineer at Precision Neuroscopics Inc., Jasmine now researches and develops emerging neuro-technologies optimized for coarse, curly hair and dark skin, such as EEG and functional near-infrared spectroscopy. Through this work, she fiercely advocates for racially and phenotypically inclusive medical device design within and beyond the neurosciences. Her work in the ethics space has been featured in Nature Neuroscience, the International Neuroethics Society, the Emory Neuroethics Blog, and the international #BlackInNeuro initiative.

Jasmine has received several honors and awards to fund her burgeoning scientific career, including being named a New Face in Engineering (2013), a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow and Ford Foundation Fellow (2015), a Society for Neuroscience Fellow (2017), a National Institutes of Health Brain Initiative F99/K00 Fellow (2019), a Burroughs Wellcome Fund Fellow (2022), and a "Rising Star in Biomedical Engineering" by MIT.

In her free time, Jasmine is a dance fitness instructor and enjoys staying involved with IMSA through the Black Alumni Association ([link](#)), which she co-founded in the Summer of 2020. She also enjoys travel and relishes time with her enormous half-Chicagoan, half-Kenyan family. Dr. Kwasa is available for speaking engagements related to best practices for inclusive design, STEM education pedagogy, and DEI&J in higher ed; technical talks on her findings in auditory neuroscience and inclusive EEG design; training and workshops for grant writing, essay writing, resume/CV polishing, and admissions at the high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels; and inspirational lectures for youth and college students in STEM.

Honoring the Founding Father of IMSA and Nobel Laureate

Dr. Leon Lederman

July 15, 1922 – October 3, 2018



[Learn More](#)

"If we do what we know and feel is right, it is bound to happen that among our graduates there will be numbered scientists, engineers, and those who go on to earn degrees in law and letters. There are likely to be those few who create new intellectual worlds, cure a dreaded human ailment or in some other way significantly influence life on our planet. Our philosophy will be to treat our charges as if each one is capable of this extraordinary achievement."
- Dr. Leon Lederman, 1985

Special thanks to Creative Soundz Equipment, Bill McGrail, Dottie Krett, Facilities and Tamara Newquist for video, production, special effects and creative direction.



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