



NATIONAL INVENTORS HALL OF FAME®

NATIONAL INVENTORS HALL OF FAME ANNOUNCES 2012 INDUCTEES

Inventors of the laser printer, thin-film head technology, and first statin among those honored

Alexandria VA (March 1, 2012)—In celebration of its mission to recognize and foster invention, the National Inventors Hall of Fame has announced its 2012 Inductees. The inventors to be honored this year created remarkable innovations that include the now ubiquitous laser printer commonly found in the workplace, the thin-film head technology that has contributed to the success of the disk drive industry, and the first statin which pioneered the class of drugs targeted at lowering cholesterol.

This year's Induction ceremony, sponsored in part by the United States Patent and Trademark Office, will take place on May 2 at the historic Patent Office Building, now the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery, in Washington, D.C. At that time, the 2012 Inductees will be recognized for work such as the carbon dioxide laser which is widely used across diverse fields, the design of computer programming languages, and solar thermal storage innovations.

The National Inventors Hall of Fame 2012 Inductees are:

Akira Endo

Mevastatin, the first statin – Endo discovered mevastatin, the first statin, pioneering research into a new class of molecules that are now a hugely successful class of drugs targeting the lowering of cholesterol. His work was done at Sankyo Company in Japan, and he is currently Director of Biopharm Research Laboratories and Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology.

Barbara Liskov

Programming languages and system design – MIT Institute Professor Liskov is considered an innovator in the design of computer programming languages, largely for helping to make computer programs more reliable, secure, and easy to use. Her innovations can be found within almost all modern programming languages.

C. Kumar N. Patel

Carbon dioxide laser – Patel invented the CO₂ laser while at Bell Labs. Since ushering in the use of high power laser applications, the CO₂ laser has become common and versatile with uses in the medical, industrial, and military arenas. Patel founded his own company, Pranalytica, to manufacture mid-infrared quantum cascade laser systems and gas sensing instruments.

Lubomyr Romankiw, David Thompson

Thin-film magnetic head – IBM researchers Romankiw and Thompson invented the first practical magnetic thin-film storage heads. Thin-film technology increased the density of data that could be stored on magnetic disks, even while the disk size was being substantially reduced, dramatically reducing the cost of data storage.

Gary Starkweather

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Laser printer – Starkweather's laser printer, invented at the Xerox PARC facility, was the first to print any images that could be created on a computer; a laser beam carried digital information, and the copier then developed the imaged digital information to make a print. The laser printer would go on to become one of Xerox's best selling products of all time.

Alejandro Zaffaroni

Controlled drug delivery systems – Biotechnology innovator Zaffaroni conducted early work in controlled drug delivery methods, particularly early concepts for transdermal patches, which led to the growth of research in innovative drug delivery systems. He has founded numerous biotech companies throughout his career.

Dennis Gabor (1900-1979)

Electron holography – Gabor is best known for his research in electron optics which led to the invention of holography. Because of his efforts and also the efforts of researchers after him, holography has seen numerous modern day applications.

Steve Jobs (1955-2011)

Modern computing technology – Apple co-founder Jobs, named on over 40 utility patents, has been a major influence on a number of industries, including personal computing, animated movies, music, smart phones, tablet computing, and digital publishing.

Mária Telkes (1900-1995)

Solar thermal storage systems – Telkes was a highly respected innovator and a foremost authority in the field of solar energy, widely publishing and inventing on the topic throughout her career. Ultimately Professor Emeritus at the University of Delaware, Telkes also spent time at MIT, NYU, and in industry.

“This year's class of Inductees demonstrates the importance of innovation,” said Edward Gray, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Inventors Hall of Fame. “The applications and widespread use of their inventions show us how vital ingenuity is to not just the well-being of the United States, but also the rest of the world.”

The National Inventors Hall of Fame annually accepts nominations for men and women whose work has changed society and improved the quality of life. The candidate's invention must be covered by a United States patent, and the work must have had a major impact on society, the public welfare, and the progress of science and the useful arts.

About the Hall of Fame

The National Inventors Hall of Fame is the premier non-profit organization in America dedicated to honoring legendary inventors whose innovations and entrepreneurial endeavors have changed the world. Founded in 1973 by the United States Patent and Trademark Office and the National Council of Intellectual Property Law Association, the Hall of Fame will have 470 Inductees with its 2012 Induction. The National Inventors Hall of Fame and Museum is located in the atrium of the Madison Building on the campus of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, at 600 Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA. Hall of Fame hours are Monday through Friday 9 AM to 5 PM, and Saturday from Noon to 5 PM (closed Sundays and federal holidays). Admission is free. For more information on the National Inventors Hall of Fame, including Inductee nomination forms and a full listing of Inductees, please visit www.invent.org.

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