



MENSA[®] Education & Research FOUNDATION

2008–09 Report

Supporting and Encouraging Intelligence

The Mensa Education & Research Foundation is a philanthropic, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization committed to the pursuit of excellence in the areas of intelligence. Its mission and strategic programs include scholarships, research, education, and awards.

The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees who are volunteers elected by members of

the American Mensa Committee (AMC), the voting members of the Foundation.

Funding support comes from American Mensa, Ltd.; Mensa International, Ltd.; and other charitable donations.

Donations to the Mensa Foundation are deductible for income tax purposes in the United States.

A Year of Successes

by President Greg Timmers

The Mensa Foundation **vision—to recognize, encourage, and communicate excellence in intelligence**—is highlighted in our report to you.

“To fulfill Mensa’s potential, it is my personal belief that more people need to understand that we are so much more than simply a social club,” said Björn Liljeqvist, Chair of Mensa Sweden. “Never is this expressed more vividly around the world than in the activities of the Mensa Foundation, the organization’s programs, and the *Mensa Research Journal*.”

The Mensa Foundation **big goal—to be seen as the global resource in all areas of intelligence**—is differentiated by another of our leaders, Tanja Gabriele Baudson, program coordinator of Mensa in Deutschland e.V. “While bringing together persons of similar intelligence is certainly a worthy goal, we also consider both the scientific and the educational aspect to be no less important. We are developing an advisory board focusing on, but not limited to, giftedness and intelligence research and related disciplines.”

The Mensa Foundation **mission—to achieve our vision globally through education, research, and recognition programs**—is an intellectual journey rather than a destination. The Trustees have asked Stuart Friedman to chair the Mensa Foundation

Advisory Council to assist their efforts to access and coordinate world-wide leadership and technical expertise.

Identifying **evidence-based research** that can be translated into best practices will require Mensa to ask for help from many. Mensa has the recognition to lend credibility to intellectual best practices. Mensa has the desire for **perpetual education** that will be needed to benefit society. Mensa recognizes that translating research into action ultimately takes place at a personal level—in the classroom or individually.

Mensa exists in a relentlessly competitive environment with many demands for existing resources. The Mensa Foundation has been recognized for its **financial acumen** on its operating and investing successes. Its conservative approach to investments has resulted in a continuing source of income available to support an expanding array of programs for members and society.

The boards of the Mensa Foundation, Mensa International, Ltd., and American Mensa, Ltd. thank the Mensa members and others for continued support of programs that enhance personal intelligence to the benefit of society.



Awards

Recognizing the Exceptional

Teaching

Judy Scruggs, a Virginia elementary school teacher, has been honored with the **Distinguished Teacher Award**.

She was nominated for the award by a Mensa member and former student, Dr. Stephanie Elzy. Scruggs was Elzy's second-grade teacher and taught reading, writing, spelling, English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In her nomination essay, Elzy wrote that Scruggs was "an exemplary teacher attuned to students'



Judy Scruggs (left), is presented the Distinguished Teacher Award by Karen Hensley, Local Secretary of Thomas Jefferson Mensa.

intellectual and emotional needs" and that "her greatest gift to me was music—she explained the meaning and value of notes, and I still utilize her instruction each time I play the harp, violin, piano, or clarinet."

"To touch the lives of students is extremely rewarding, but also a profound responsibility," said Scruggs. "My favorite part of teaching was when a student had an 'aha moment.' Hopefully, I didn't just teach, but tried to guide students to discoveries on their own."

The Distinguished Teacher Award recognizes a teacher, professor, or instructor at any educational level who has had an especially positive influence on the education or life of a Mensa member, either directly or as a result of their influence on the education of a dependent.

Communication

Birmingham (AL) freelance journalist and teacher **Chris Copeland** has been honored with the 2008 **Mensa Press Award** for his feature "The Art of Smart", published in the July 2008 *Birmingham Magazine*.

"The Art of Smart" examined different ways a person is smart and profiled some of Birmingham's smartest people. The article also encouraged readers to evaluate their own brains and giftedness, and included tips on how to use their own passions and intelligence in everyday life.

This national award is presented to one individual each year who shows excellence in writing about intelligence and human giftedness in media designed for lay audiences.

Creativity

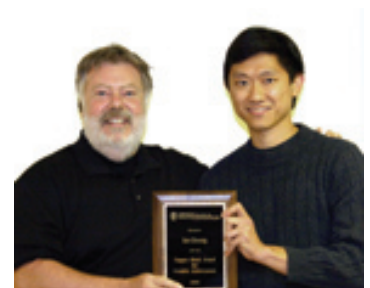
Ian Cheong of Maryland Mensa is the 2008 recipient of the **Copper Black Award** for his discovery of a "cancer bullet" that can strike and destroy malignant tumors without toxicity to outlying tissue.

Cheong discovered a novel protein, produced by an anaerobic bacterium that resides in oxygen-depleted tissue, that disintegrates lipostuctures.

He then thought of the idea that these lipostuctures, filled with chemotherapeutic toxins, could be introduced in the body, following the bacterium. The protein would rupture the lipostucture and release the toxins inside the tumor only, thereby destroying the malignancy.

The discovery has yet to undergo human testing, but has been tested in mice and found to have completely destroyed tumors in 60 percent and have reduced tumor growth in all.

The Copper Black Award was named after the late Ms. Copper Black, a Mensa member who greatly valued creativity. In her will, she left a legacy by funding a special annual award to recognize an outstanding creative achievement by a member of American Mensa.



Bill Baker, Maryland Mensa Local Secretary (left), with Ian Cheong.

Awards

Recognizing the Exceptional

■ *Research*

The **Awards for Excellence in Research** are given yearly for outstanding research on intelligence, intellectual giftedness, and related fields.

Senior Researchers

Joseph F. Fagan, Case Western University, OH, "The Prediction, From Infancy, of Adult IQ and Achievement," *Intelligence*.

David Lubinski, Vanderbilt University, TN, "Tracking Exceptional Human Capital Over Two Decades," *Psychological Science*.

Dean Keith Simonton, University of California–Davis, "Childhood Giftedness and Adulthood Genius: A Historiometric Analysis of 291 Eminent African Americans," *Gifted Child Quarterly*.

Joyce Van Tassel-Baska, College of William and Mary, VA, "A Cross-Cultural Study of Teachers' Instructional Practices in Singapore and the United States," *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*.

Junior Researchers

Rosalin Arden, King's College, London, "Intelligence and Semen Quality are Positively Correlated," *Intelligence*.

Gregory Park, Vanderbilt University, TN, "Contrasting Intellectual Patterns Predict Creativity in the Arts and Sciences," *Psychological Science*.

■ *Intellectual Benefits*

A new award, the 2008 **International Award for Intellectual Benefits to Society**, goes to **Nicole Schuster** of Mensa Germany.

Her accomplishment: Giving autistic-disabled people a voice in Germany. Ms. Schuster, now 23, was diagnosed with Asperger's, a form of autism, at the age of 20. Since that diagnosis, she has written two books on living with Asperger's, one book being a subject best seller in her home country.

Shocked by what society thinks about autistic persons, Ms. Schuster has become a bridge between two worlds. She gives a voice to autistic people in Germany, where she is heard on radio and appears on television. She lectures frequently, and her

widely published articles have begun to educate the public on the experience of being autistic. She is dedicated to providing a better understanding of this greatly misunderstood condition.

This award recognizes an international Mensa member for the application of intellectual abilities that result in a tangible benefit to society.

■ *Lifetime Achievement*

The 2008 **International Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to **Professor Miraca Gross**, a resident of Sydney, Australia, and a professor of gifted education at the University of New South Wales and director of the Gifted Education Research Resource and Information Centre. This award honors an individual's lifetime of contributions to the field of intelligence, giftedness, or creativity.

For more than 25 years, Gross has made it her mission to further the study of giftedness and intelligence research. In 2008, Gross was awarded the Order of Australia by Her Majesty the Queen for her services to education for the gifted.

She has also won several international awards, including the Hollingworth Award for Excellence in Research in the Education and Psychology of the Gifted (1987); the Mensa Education & Research Foundation Award for Excellence in Research (1988, 1990); and the American National Association for Gifted Children Early Scholar Award (1995) and Distinguished Scholar Award (2005).

In addition to authoring 100+ articles, Gross wrote the internationally acclaimed book, *Exceptionally Gifted Children*, with a second edition published in 2004. These books are two of many publications based on Gross' 25-year longitudinal study of 60 young Australians with an IQ of 160+.



Sam Simmonds of Mensa Australia presented the award to Dr. Gross.

Scholarships

Opening Doors of Opportunity

Scholarships are awarded at the local, regional, national, and international level; the international and national awards are listed here. A full list is on the website at www.mensafoundation.org under Scholarships.

Scholarship winners' education plans range from associate degrees at community colleges through doctorate degrees at major universities. Their majors run the gamut of the fine arts, sciences, engineering, education, business, humanities, social sciences, and nursing. About one-third of the winners are working on advanced degrees including medicine, physical therapy, and law.

International Award (\$1,000)

- **Michael Tubby**, Christchurch, New Zealand.

National Awards (\$1,000)

- *J.F. Schirmer Scholarship*: **Sarah Courbis**, Portland, OR; **Stephaney Cox**, Trabuco Canyon, CA; **Jessica Lien**, Phoenix, OR.
- *Margot Seitelman Memorial Scholarship*: **Hannah Heath Johnson**, Marion, AR. (Graduate student who plans a career in professional writing or teaching English grammar and/or writing)
- *David Mann Memorial Scholarship*: **Alexis Avram**, Austin, TX. (Study of aeronautical engineering or an aerospace field)

National Awards (\$600)

- *Jerry Salny Memorial Scholarship*: **John Kilgore**, Lino Lakes, MN.
- *Rita Levine Memorial Scholarship*: **Bic G. Chau**, Carrollton, TX. (For a female returning to school after an absence of seven or more years)
- *The Sylvia Scholarship*: **Pushpa Asia Neupane**, Arlington, VA. (Study or career in education)
- *Harper Fowley-Isolated M Award*: **Carol Wilson**, Royal Oak, MI. (Study for an undergraduate liberal arts degree)
- *Margie Mandelblatt Award*: **Kayley Richards**, Issaquah, WA. (Study in journalism)

- *Grace Harrington Wilson Scholarship*: **Christina Durano**, Albuquerque, NM. (For a female student with a focus in journalism)
- *Lester London Award*: **Kyle Goyette**, Austin, TX. (Must be enrolled as a graduate student in history when applying)
- *Rosemary Greathouse Scholarship*: **Hannah Leland**, Portland, OR. (For a student pursuing a degree in the arts, including creative writing and journalism)
- *Helen Kupper Scholarship*: **David Inghram**, Altadena, CA. (For a student pursuing a degree in the fine arts)
- *Joe Zanca Scholarship*: **Nicholas Schober**, Irvine, CA.
- *Walt and Mary McGrew Scholarship for Veterans*: **Charles Jonathan White**, Riverview, FL.

Mensa Member Awards (\$1,000)

- *Dorothy Bloom Scholarship*: **Dresden Skees-Gregory**, Hillsboro, OR.
- *Helen Kupper Scholarship*: **Nicole Reichert**, Middletown, NJ.
- *Gabe Werba Scholarship*: **Rebecca Nock**, Houston, TX.
- *Nancy Zanca Scholarship*: **Brekken Armstrong**, St. Paul, MN.

This Year's Numbers

- 64,000** Dollar value of awards this year.
- 400** Approximate number of volunteers for each year's scholarship program.
- 146** Total number of scholarships awarded by the Mensa Foundation.
- 76** Number of American Mensa local groups participating (includes Hawaii and Alaska).
- 53** Age of the oldest scholarship winner.
- 40** Number of states represented by winners.
- 13** Age of the youngest scholarship winner.

Conversations with Mensa

Discussions on Interesting Topics

For more than 30 years, the Mensa Education & Research Foundation has been a strong voice in supporting intelligence, and now it has a voice you can hear.

The Mensa Foundation's award-winning podcast series, "**Conversations with Mensa**," is now available online. Each conversation features up to 60 minutes of dialog between Mensans and experts in fields related to the Foundation's educational mission.

Podcasts are available for listening or download at <http://www.mensafoundation.org/conversations> or through the iTunes music store. In iTunes, search for "Conversations with Mensa" to easily subscribe to the series free of charge, sync podcasts onto a device, and receive new podcasts as soon as they become available.

The Conversations with Mensa podcast series has received the Association TRENDS 2008 Silver Award for best podcast as well as a 2009 APEX Award of Excellence for its graphic design, editorial content, and overall communications excellence.

Current podcasts include:



Women and Creativity with entrepreneur, writer, and Mensan Tarek Saab conversing with the Mensa Foundation's 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Dr. Jane

Piirto, about the ramifications of her life's work in creativity and giftedness.

The Art of the Bluff, in which renowned actor and Mensan Alan Rachins discusses the area where psychology and poker intersect with internationally recognized poker professional Howard Lederer.



Revolution in Cosmology features an interview by Heather Preston—a NASA researcher, astronomy instructor, and Mensan—discussing exciting developments and complex theories in cosmology with George Musser, editor for *Scientific American* magazine.

Taking Control of ADD features Dr. Frank Lawlis, author of "The ADD Answer," who provides basic information about Attention Deficit Disorder and the steps that can be taken to manage it. Leading the discussion is Mensa member Robin Crawford, an experienced educator and mother of twin Mensans.



Upcoming conversation topics include reinventing yourself, genealogy, and the music genome project. Feel free to direct ideas for future podcasts to conversations@mensafoundation.org.

Colloquiums

Stimulating Thinking

Colloquiums examine contemporary issues in depth with authoritative speakers and discussions. These American Mensa, Ltd., events were sponsored by the Mensa Education & Research Foundation

Weather or Not

Colloquium 2009, held February 27–March 1 in Atlanta, GA, and chaired by Cyndi Kuyper examined the past, present, and future of climate change. Speakers included Dr. Heidi Cullen, of the Weather Channel; Dr. James E. Hansen, NASA Goddard Insti-

tute for Space Studies; Dr. Greg Holland, National Center for Atmospheric Research; and Dr. Joshua Wurman, Center for Severe Weather Research, among others.

Tracking Granny's Granny: The Genealogy Quest

Colloquium 2008, held September 12–14 in Salt Lake City, UT, and chaired by Eldon Romney, presented a number of knowledgeable speakers in the genealogical community. Attendees also took advantage of time at the Family History Library.

Gifted Children Programs

Nurturing the Future

The Mensa Foundation continues to increase its support of gifted children and related programs. Highlights of the previous year include:

- Added a **Gifted Children section to the Mensa Foundation website** (under Programs). The section includes information on the Mensa for Kids website, resources, scholarships, and more.
- Continued to add content and enhance the **Mensa For Kids website** (www.mensaforkids.com) and provide funding for the 2008–2009 year. The site includes educational and challenging games; resources for kids, parents, and teachers; lesson plans and study tips; and a thought-provoking Feature of the Month written by a Mensan for the younger audience.
- The Mensa For Kids (MFK) website won a **bronze award** in the category of **Online Publishing—Design Excellence** from the Society of National Association Publications (SNAP). Among a record-breaking number of entries this year, MFK displayed superior quality and is considered one of the best and brightest in the association community. SNAP is a non-profit, professional society serving the needs of association publishers and communications professionals.
- Provided funding for a **Gifted Children Specialist** to develop more gifted children resources for the Mensa for Kids website, among other assignments. Lisa Van Gemert is a certified secondary gifted education specialist in Texas. Her experience includes conducting training in gifted education to train teachers around the state. Lisa was a gifted child and is now a parent of gifted children.
- Provided **financial support for grants** given by Mensa's Gifted Children Program.
- Provided funding for **Kids Trek, Tween Trek, and Teen SIG** activities at American Mensa's Annual Gathering. *Highlights for Children* magazine also provided an in-kind donation.



Around the Globe

International Activities

The Mensa Education & Research Foundation and Mensa International, Ltd., work together to provide opportunities to Mensa members around the world.

Mensa Research Journal

Several articles published in the *Mensa Research Journal* are authored by members of the international community as are guest columns.

To assist in world-wide distribution, postage costs for international subscribers are subsidized so that the yearly subscription rate is the same as for U.S. subscribers. Additionally, a discounted rate for group subscriptions is now offered, which Mensa Sweden has taken advantage of for its members.

Award Programs

International award programs include: Copper Black International Award for Creative Achievement; International Award for Intellectual Benefits to Society; International Lifetime Achievement Award; International Scholarship Program; and Awards for Excellence in Research.

Outreach

Dr. Abbie Salny has made several presentations on the Mensa Foundation to international audiences, including the Denmark, German, and European Mensa Annual Gatherings.

To keep you updated on the work of the Mensa Foundation, we've created a new online newsletter. You can read the most recent issue of the Foundation News at the following web address:

www.mensafoundation.org/foundationnews

Thank You to Our Donors

Our Work Depends on You

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of our donors. They are truly the base for the Mensa Foundation that allows us to continue and enhance our programs. In addition to those listed here, many others have contributed support for the year's successes. Our thanks . . . we couldn't do it without you.

Platinum Level (\$2500+)

Osterloh Family Trust
L Edwin Rybak
Russell Francis Taptich

Gold Level (\$1,000–\$2,499)

Bertha Lilley Clarke
Microsoft Corp
Herbert Richard Pennington Jr
Dave Remine
Alton W Skinner
Gregory D Timmers
Western Pennsylvania Mensa

Silver Level (\$500–\$999)

L Michael Aschoff
Paul Dowling
Highlights for Children
Beverly Mandelblatt
Douglas L Miller
Oregon Mensa
Dr John Thomas Sheehan
Paul and Joanna M Soper
Matthew Taylor

Bronze Level (\$250–\$499)

Kristin Becker
Denver Mensa
Judith Coppock Gex
Linda L Olson
W Harry Probert
Asher Solomon Rosenberg
South Mississippi Mensa
Thomas A Vonderahe

Foundation Level (\$100–\$249)

AG 2008 Committee
Karen A Barrett
Jill Baumbach
Roland Benjamin
Cecil J Bennett
Lucilla Jane Berman
Vincent Bogan
Neil Caesar
Allan B Cerkan
Crystal L DeFrate
Mike Dehart
Delaware Valley Mensa
Francesca Ann DeLuca
Robert S Devins
Cecile Dobson
David Felt
Carl Clarence Fields

Foundation Level (continued)

Kerry B Fitzpatrick
Jo Anne Forman
Stuart W Friedman
Good Search
Susan Goudy
Gulf Coast Mensa
Cynthia M Hamilton
Dr Kenneth Charles Haugk PhD
Joan Vitek Hiller PhD
Rick Hodges
Linda Gail Hohman
Arlen G Horst
William W Huss JD
Nathan J Huynh
Dr Kenneth Michael Jandes
Rosanne C Krone
Dr Kishor M Kulkarni
Dr Steven Langer
Paul Steven Levine
John Lewis
Desmond Macauley
Dawn Marie Mancuso
Charles Anthony Marciano
Marie Mayer
Kevin W McAuliffe
Patricia L Merk

Foundation Level (continued)

Mark Meyer
Phyllis Miller
Robert H Morrison
Ambar Mukherjee
Dr Tahir Niazi
Marian Mccamy Phillips
Thomas A Pledge Jr
Angela Pope
Rev Donne E Puckle
Weslie L Rau
Redwood Empire Mensa
Ralph Remsburg
Dr David J Rhoads
Eugen Schibli
Barbara Anitra Schreiber
Kenneth A Silver
George J Smith
Nelson Hunter Spencer
Caren Stratz
Donald S Taylor
Robert W Templeton
Lawrence E Towle
Benjamin S Trigonoplos
Paula Tutein
Frederic Vereecken
Kerry Lee Walacavage
Phil David Wedemeyer
Gregg Wiggins

Mensa Research Journal

Understanding Our Community

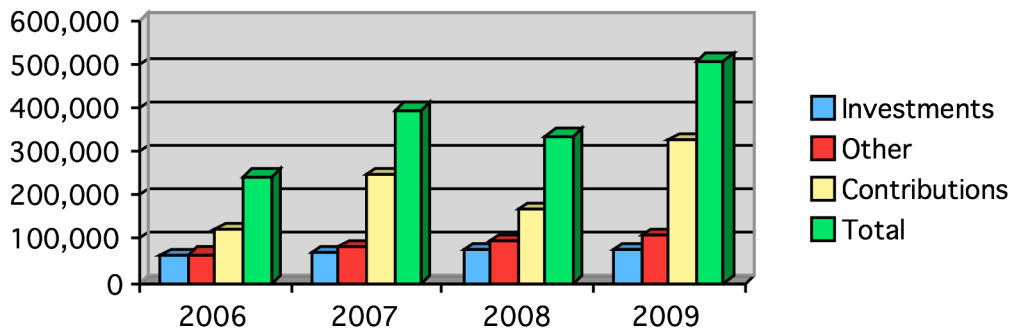
In cooperation with Mensa International, Ltd., the *Mensa Research Journal* is published three times a year to recognize and highlight the latest and best research into all aspects of intelligence and giftedness.

Themes for 2008–2009 included “Gifted in the Workplace,” “Artistic Intelligence,” and an issue featuring articles from recipients of the Awards for Excellence in Research. Future themes include “Barriers to Educating the Gifted” and “Autism.”

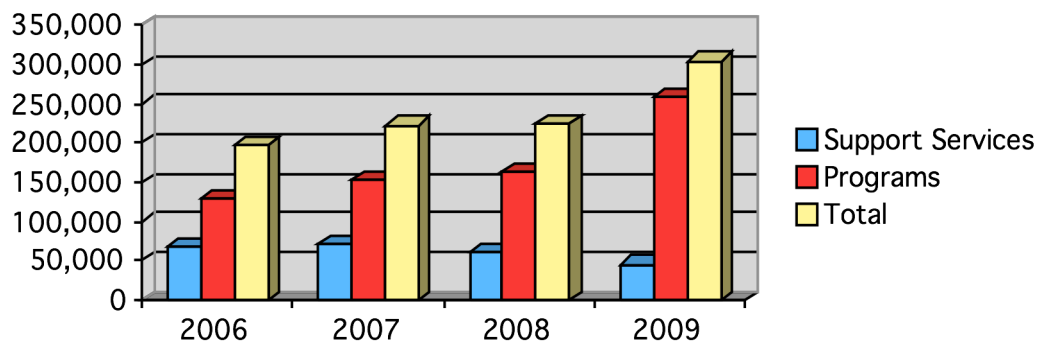
Financials in Brief

Four-Year Perspective

Revenue Sources



Expenditures



Items of Interest

- The Foundation is managed by paid staff representing one full-time equivalent and volunteer Trustees, committees, and Mensa members donating thousands of hours.
- Investments totalling \$2.5 million are backed by government agencies. No losses on investments have been incurred.
- Contributions in 2009 included a grant from American Mensa, Ltd., of \$58,000. The grant covered all support services.
- More than 80 percent of 2009 contributions were received from Mensa members and the public. All funds will be used for Foundation programs.
- Expenditures for programs as a percentage of prior year-end net assets increased to 11.3 percent in 2009, compared to 7.6 percent during 2008.

Leadership

Trustees and Staff



Left to right:

Dave Remine, Trustee; **Jill Beckham**, Foundation Director; **Elissa Rudolph**, AMC Representative; **Michael Jacobson**, Treasurer and Trustee; **Gregory Timmers**, President and Trustee; **Francis Cartier**, Trustee; **John Sheehan**, Trustee; **Marie Mayer**, Trustee; **Phyllis Miller**, Vice President and Trustee; **Joanna Soper**, Trustee; and **David Felt**, Secretary and Trustee.