

HALL OF FAME COIN

Advancements in science and technology have brought us out of the dark ages and into enlightenment. Science and technology has gifted us with the tools to preserve and protect our world, with new ways of understanding our position within that world. As our knowledge has expanded, so have our efforts toward equality. Discovery isn't attached to race or to gender; discovery is only concerned with moving forward. The women and men we honor in our Hall of Fame are leading these new advancements. Each element of the coin we bestow upon them is a map of their path to this achievement.

The seven spokes of the gear that cradles the world represent seven pinnacles of human technology, developments that have become so integral to our existence that it is, at times, all too easy to take them for granted. Mendel's study of genetics radicalized the very concept of human being. The telescopes of Galileo's day introduced us to the stars, an introduction that would one day lead to the first space shuttle. The microscopes that allowed us to discover new organisms also allowed us to use these discoveries in creating life-saving vaccines. Technology has brought all people from all places closer together; it connects us through time. The printing press empowered countless generations with the gift of knowledge, and, as a result, sparked social and political revolutions. This movement toward freedom is only continued by the Internet, where simply clicking a link or hitting send can impact the outcome of elections.

The women and men we honor here tonight are the defenders of technology; even in times that have threatened to shuttle us backward, they have upheld the shield of inquiry, they have pursued the truth. These men and women are the brightest stars in the wide sky of STEM, and the ten stars displayed around the shield reflect the talents and the opportunities that have aligned in their favor. Above the shield, the stars honor the ethical standards, the innovative drive, the creative spark, the remarkable ingenuity, and the out-and-out dedication that has moved our alums to become these defenders of science and technology, these guardians of the human spirit. These five forces were provided the opportunities to shine by the forces reflected in the five stars below: Family, friends, community, education, and employer. The spectacular convergence of these forces has brought us our Hall of Fame winners, and the world is a far better place for it.