



DoSER  
Dialogue on  
Science, Ethics,  
& Religion

AAAS



DoSER Newsletter, Spring 2019

## Fostering dialogue between scientific and religious communities since 1995

### DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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Summer is usually a time to relax, but for the AAAS Dialogue on Science, Ethics and Religion (DoSER) Program, spring and summer are the perfect time to visit our partners and grantees! Our Science for Seminaries project welcomed a new cohort of participating institutions in April, and team members have been traveling to each seminary as they prepare for the start of the school year. We are excited to work with an ever-growing group of denominations, including our first United Methodist seminary, first Canadian campus, and first schools connected to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion

Church and the Southern Baptist Convention. (More information about the 2019 Cohort can be found below.) As one participant said, “these kinds of programs...can open people’s minds and hearts to a new way of thinking about [science,] religion, and faith.” We are excited to continue expanding our reach in 2020 and 2021.

Representatives from our Engaging Scientists project also traveled across the U.S. to host workshops and panels for scientists and science communicators on best practices for constructive engagement with religious communities and students. Many speakers focused on the importance of engaging with indigenous populations, often drawing on their own experiences as members of those communities. They shared stories about working with ethnic, religious, and other communities underrepresented in the sciences, where religious faith and identity often intersect with other aspects of identity and values. Speakers also discussed community engagement on science topics ranging from public health and climate change to astronomy and genomics. We are always looking for opportunities to expand our engagement with new communities, science topics, and education centers, including informal science learning spaces.

Visit us at [www.aaas.org/DoSER](http://www.aaas.org/DoSER) to learn about our upcoming events and science communication opportunities.

– Jennifer Wiseman, Director, AAAS DoSER

## POSITION OPPORTUNITIES AT DOSER

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Join our team! Two positions with DoSER are now open:

### **Program Associate**

DoSER is hiring a Program Associate to work on the “Engaging Scientists in the Science and Religion Dialogue” Project. The project supports scientists and science communicators in inclusive science engagement with diverse religious publics through engagement toolkits, print and online resources, hosted science engagement events, and professionally facilitated workshops. Additional details can be found on the [AAAS jobs website](#). Applications are due by **August 8<sup>th</sup> 2019**.

### **Program Assistant**

DoSER is hiring a Program Assistant to provide administrative support for the program. This is an entry-level position, and will include involvement in many of DoSER’s ongoing projects including Science for Seminaries and Engaging Scientists. Additional details can be found on the [AAAS jobs website](#). Applications are due by **August 8<sup>th</sup> 2019**.

## SCIENCE FOR SEMINARIES

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### **Welcome to our 2019 Science for Seminaries Schools!**



DoSER is pleased to welcome nine seminaries to participate in the second cohort of the Science for Seminaries project. This project, created in consultation with the [Association of Theological Schools \(ATS\)](#), will help a diverse group of seminaries integrate science into their core curricula. As many as 32 seminaries will be chosen to participate over the course of the five-year project.

The nine seminaries are Ambrose Seminary, Catholic Theological Union, George W. Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University, Hood Theological Seminary, Iliff School of Theology, Knox Theological Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, St. John’s Seminary, and Wartburg Seminary.

[Learn more about the 2019 Cohort >>](#)

## Seminary Highlight: McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago



McCormick Theological Seminary, part of the 2018 Cohort, is associated with the Presbyterian Church (USA) and is 12 months into its 18-month grant. Project leaders Rev. Dr. Anna Case-Winters and Dr. Reggie Williams (left) have led McCormick in multiple course revisions, continuing education projects, and three major seminary events. “What we find,” write Dr. Case-Winters and Dr. Williams, “is that the really big questions people of faith are asking are, in fact, deepened and illumined through engagement with science.” In their first event, astronomer Dr. Grace Wolf-Chase presented on “Stars, Planets, and Prospects for Extraterrestrial Life in our Interactive Cosmos.” Dr. Ron Cole-Turner, Professor of Ethics at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, discussed “Rethinking Resurrection in an Age of Human Enhancement Technologies” at the second event. At the end of the grant, McCormick will welcome Brother Guy Consolmagno, S.J., Director of the Vatican Observatory, to present a lecture on “Science, Faith and the Common Good.” DoSER is excited to see the wonderful work happening at McCormick and at the 15 other schools around the U.S. and Canada!

### Applications for the 2020 Cohort will open in August



Interested in expanding the role that science plays in your school’s theological education? Grant applications for the 2020 Cohort will open in August. All ATS-accredited seminaries are eligible to participate. Apply to join the growing Science for Seminaries community of schools, and encourage your colleagues to apply as well!

[Visit the Science for Seminaries website to learn more >>](#)

## ENGAGING SCIENTISTS

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This past year, six universities from across the U.S. hosted public events on science and society, workshops about science communication with religious publics, and a public engagement contest that recognizes ongoing or prospective science engagement with diverse communities. These universities were participants in the “Engaging Scientists in the Science and Religion Dialogue” project, organized by DoSER and the [AAAS Center for Public Engagement with](#)

[Science and Technology](#). Click on the links below for more information about each event.



In November 2018, [Texas State University](#) (TXSU) hosted a keynote by Dr. [Maithilee Kunda](#) of Vanderbilt University. Dr. Kunda discussed how visual thinking contributes to learning and intelligent behavior, and how AI influences our understanding of human intelligence. Later, an interdisciplinary panel of TXSU scholars discussed challenges and opportunities for science engagement with faith communities.



[Stanford University's](#) event, "Science and Spirituality in Conversation," featured Dr. Nalini Nadkarni, a forest ecologist from the University of Utah. She shared her stories on engaging about science and nature with religious audiences and with incarcerated populations. The respondent, Dr. Willis Jenkins, a professor of religious studies at the University of Virginia, explored the roles of religion and ethics in sustainability challenges. A story about the

event [was published in the Stanford Daily](#).



DoSER supported an interdisciplinary panel at [Howard University](#) titled, "Beyond the Research: A Transdisciplinary Dialogue Engaging Scientists in the Science and Religion Dialogue." We also hosted three scientists as part of TedxLeDroitPark, an independent

TED event, to "spur...dialogue through diverse talks and live performances." Dr. [John Carpten](#), a genome scientist from the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine, spoke on creating dialogue about participation in medical research trials among African American communities. Dr. [Jarita Holbrook](#), an astrophysicist from the University of Western Cape, discussed the intersections of astronomy and religious practice, as well as inclusive astronomy education in South Africa. Dr. [J. Marshall Shepherd](#), an international expert in weather and climate from the University of Georgia, highlighted the disproportionate impacts of climate change on communities of color in the U.S.



[Vanderbilt University](#) hosted a keynote and panel discussion for their students. The keynote speaker, Dr. Briana Pobiner of the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History, discussed "Exploring Who We Are: Public Engagement on Human Evolution," and Rev. C. Nolan Huizenga of the Second Presbyterian Church responded. The panel discussion focused on "Where Science and Spirituality Meet,"

with three Vanderbilt professors: Dr. Joseph Fanning, Center for Biomedical Ethics and Society; Dr. Maithilee Kunda, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences; and Dr. David Weintraub, Communication of Science and Technology Program.



In March 2019, the [University of Maryland – Baltimore County](#) hosted a panel of science communicators, scientists, and medical professionals to discuss their engagement with scientific and faith communities. Rabbi Geoff Mitelman, founder of [Sinai and Synapses](#), shared his expertise in constructive discourse and science and society topics. Dr. Caitlin Schrein from the Howard

Hughes Medical Institute is a science communicator specializing in anthropology and evolution. Dr. Altaf Saadi, a neurologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, promotes healthcare leadership, social justice and science-informed advocacy. Dr. Pamela Payne-Foster, a preventative medicine and public health physician at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa Regional Campus, shared best practices from her work in community health partnerships. [Watch the video here.](#)



At their April 2019 event, [Indiana University](#) highlighted science engagement and practice within indigenous communities, and focused on best practices to honor faith, culture, and worldviews. Speakers included Annette Lee, professor of astronomy at St. Cloud State University and founder of [Native Skywatchers](#); Dr. Elizabeth DiGangi, bioarchaeologist and forensic anthropologist at Binghamton

University; and Dr. Fatimah Jackson, a biologist focusing on genetic variation in peoples of African descent at Howard University. [Watch the video here.](#)

The Engaging Scientists project is exploring new directions in science engagement, including in informal science learning (ISL) spaces such as zoos, aquariums, and science centers. Stay tuned!

[More information about the Engaging Scientists workshops and events >>](#)

## OTHER AAAS HAPPENINGS

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### [Apply to be an IF/THEN Ambassador](#)

Deadline: July 21, 2019, 11:59pm ET

The AAAS IF/THEN Ambassadors program will bring together 100 women from a variety of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers to serve as high-profile role models for middle school girls. Ambassadors will receive an award and have access to skill-building, media, and engagement opportunities during August 2019-February 2021. [Applications close July 21, 2019.](#)

### [AAAS Award for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility](#)

Deadline: August 1, 2019, 11:59 pm ET

The AAAS Award for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility honors scientists, engineers, and their organizations whose exemplary actions have demonstrated scientific freedom and/or responsibility in challenging circumstances.

### [AAAS Science and Human Rights Conference](#)

October 23-25, 2019, Washington, DC

The Science and Human Rights Conference will draw attention to the important role scientists, engineers, and health professionals have played in promoting and protecting human rights. Participants will take stock of progress made in the last ten years and develop approaches to the most urgent human rights challenges ahead of us. [Early Bird registration closes September 1.](#)

### [Apply to be a Science & Technology Policy Fellow](#)

Deadline: November 1, 2019

Each year, AAAS places more than 250 people with doctoral-level science degrees or a master's in engineering across all branches of federal government to learn first-hand about policymaking and use their knowledge and skills to address today's most pressing societal challenges. If you are interested in applying for the Fellowship but are not sure if it's right for you, [register for an informational webinar](#) on August 14, September 19, and October 8.

## SUPPORT SCIENCE-RELIGION DIALOGUE

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Did you know that DoSER is partially funded by the generosity of donors like you? Supporting DoSER's vital work of facilitating conversations between scientists and religious communities is as easy as clicking the link below. Your donation will help us continue the dialogue and expand our reach into exciting new areas. Email us at [doser@aaas.org](mailto:doser@aaas.org) to learn more.

[DONATE »](#)

A horizontal banner with a black background. On the left, there are three circular icons: a globe, a microscope, and a dinosaur skeleton. To the right of these icons, the text reads "ENHANCE YOUR CLASSROOM REACH - SCIENCE VIDEOS FROM" in white. Below this, the DoSER logo (three blue hexagons) and the AAAS logo (a stylized 'A' in a square) are shown. At the bottom, it says "Download at SCIENCEFORSEMINARIES.ORG" in white.

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For more information about this event, contact [doser@aaas.org](mailto:doser@aaas.org)