
Four Penn Professors Among 2017 Class of AAAS Fellows

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ADVANCING SCIENCE, SERVING SOCIETY

Four Penn professors were elected to the 2017 Class of AAAS Fellows.

Four members of the [University of Pennsylvania](#) faculty have been named Fellows of the [American Association for the Advancement of Science](#). Election as an [AAAS Fellow](#) is an honor bestowed upon members of AAAS, the world's largest general scientific society, by their peers.



Gustavo D. Aguirre and Daniel José Mindiola

The Penn professors are among 396 members awarded the honor this year because of their scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications.

The new Penn AAAS Fellow are:

Gustavo D. Aguirre, professor of medical genetics and ophthalmology in the **School of Veterinary Medicine**, was selected for “distinguished contributions to the field of inherited blindness, particularly for the identification of blindness-causing genes and development of gene therapy to treat blindness.” Aguirre’s research spans several vision disorders, including Leber’s congenital amaurosis, Best disease and retinitis pigmentosa. His approach to developing genetic therapies for dogs has paved the way to clinical trials in humans.

Professor in the **School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Chemistry**, was selected for “seminal contributions in the construct of unusual complexes having reactive metal-ligand multiple bonds and their role in carbon-hydrogen or carbon-hydroatom activation and functionalization.” A research goal of Mindiola’s team is to convert natural gas or shale gas into more value-added materials and take advantage of the energy stored in the carbon-hydrogen bonds without burning these natural resources.

Daniel José Mindiola, Presidential



Hongzhe Li, professor of biostatistics in biostatistics and epidemiology in the **Perelman School of Medicine**, was selected for “distinguished contributions to statistical genetics



Hongzhe Li and Anil K. Rustgi

methodology, promotion of statistical reasoning in society and modeling of high dimensional genomic and metagenomic data." His research interests include statistical genetics/genomics and metagenomics, the study of the genetic material of entire microbial communities in environmental samples, with the goal of understanding the genetic and genomic bases of complex biological systems, including the initiation and development of human diseases.

Anil K. Rustgi, chief of the **Division of Gastroenterology** in the **Perelman School of Medicine**, was selected for

"contributions to cancer biology, including the identification of p120 catenin, a protein located in the cytoplasm of cells, as a tumor suppressor, and for insights into the tumor

microenvironment." His research interests include oncogenes, mutated normal genes that contribute to tumor growth, tumor suppressor genes and the molecular genetics of GI cancers, including those of the colon, pancreas and esophagus. He has been a leader in 3D culture systems.

This year's AAAS fellows will be announced in the AAAS News & Notes section of Science on Nov. 24 and formally recognized on Feb. 17 during the AAAS annual meeting in Austin, Texas.

"Genius without education is like silver in the mine. — BEN FRANKLIN

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