

Visions of Science Network for Learning
18th Annual 2009 Science Symposium Speaker's Bio



Dr. Francis M. Amara, Associate Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Medical Genetics

Director and Founder of the Biomedical Youth Program

Dr. Amara is a Principal Investigator & Associate Professor, Division of Neurodegenerative Disorders. The main research focus in his laboratory is to define the molecular mechanisms involved in memory dysfunction at the onset of Alzheimer's disease (AD). Alzheimer's disease (AD) is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that is characterized by mild impairment of memory at its onset and deficits in multiple cognitive functions in later stages. Dr. Amara is a recipient of the prestigious *University of Manitoba Presidential Outreach Award* presented to him on November 21st, 2007. Dr. Amara was recently nominated for Canadian Immigrant's Top 25 Canadian Immigrants Awards of 2009.

Following are some of the outreach activities for the benefit of children in Winnipeg and throughout Manitoba done by Dr. Amara over the past year: Dr. Amara has promoted life sciences education in schools in the North End, Winnipeg School Division. He founded the Head Start Aboriginal Biomedical Youth Program including being a mentor to Aboriginal students. He co-founded the Sierra Leone Refugee Inc, there by providing leadership, aiding newcomers to Canada and guiding new immigrants in all aspects of daily living in the Sierra Leone Community in Manitoba. In addition, he has also organized the Summer Institute for High School Science Teachers in the Winnipeg School Division. Dr. Amara has established the summer school programs in the Faculty of Medicine for elementary school children in Winnipeg, and has been instrumental in seeking partnerships for the Faculty of Medicine with the Winnipeg Foundation and the Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club. Dr. Amara is particularly dedicated to ensuring relationships between the Faculty of Medicine and the school system, and the successful integration of refugee children into the Manitoba school system.

Mr. Keith Holmes

For twenty-four years, Mr. Holmes has worked in the satellite communications industry, and since 1977, he has used computers from main frames to personal computers. Mr. Holmes has spent considerable time researching information on Black inventors at the New York Patent Library, the Schomburg Library in New York and the Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center in Washington, DC. He has lectured in New York, New Jersey and Washington, DC, and is currently working on several projects about Black inventors. Mr. Holmes has spent twenty years researching information on Black innovators and inventors from around the world.

Keith Holmes was born in Queens, New York and currently lives with his family in Brooklyn. He has published in:

The New York Observer, June 1992,
The Black World Today, Feb 2002,
Black-history-month.co.uk, 2007
Barbados Free Press, 2007,
MyAfricanDiaspora.com, 2007,
Jamaicans.com, 2007,
Africapath.com. 2008,
Africaresource.com, 2008
Blacknews.com, 2008
BHM Global News, nsjournal.com, 2008,
Louisianaweekly.com, 2008,
Ourweekly.com, 2008,
Pambazuka.org, 2008,
AllAfrica.com, 2008

Most recently Mr. Holmes has lectured at:

Senbeb Café, Washington, DC., 2009
Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, NC., 2009,
Central Piedmont Community College, NC.,
Kamit Natural Foods, Charlotte, NC, 2009,
First Baptist Church, Charlotte, NC, 2009.
United Black Student Union of California, Ontario, CA. 2009

Mr. Holmes has been featured on the following:

WEAA-FM, Morgan State, Caribbean Exchange, Baltimore, MD., 2009,
WBAI-FM, Global Black Experience, New York, NY, 2009,
WRSU-FM, Power of Gospel, New Brunswick, NJ, 2009.
BBC-Radio Caribbean Connection, Gloucestershire, United Kingdom
www.globalblackinventor.com



DR. NAWEED IMAM SYED

Canadian Physiologist, Dr. Naweed I. Syed has made strides in neurotheology and helped in increasing Canada's presence in the scientific world. Dr. Syed has made countless contributions to the science world and strides in physiology research, receiving a number of international accolades from some of the most revered institutions, including becoming a University of Leeds Scholar in 1988 and recipient of Calgary's Best Canadian award in 2004.

Dr. Syed has focused his research on the cellular and molecular basis of rhythm generation and specific synapse formation. He has directed his program towards determining how neurons find their path en route towards their targets and form specific synaptic connections with other neurons, and how their morphology and physiology is modified by injury or environmental stress.

There has been many important aspects of his research that have been considered unique and innovative. His first successful attempt to reconstruct a pattern generator *in vitro*, was featured in Medical Post (Toronto), CBC, CFCN, 2 and 7 News and Calgary Herald. He also collaborated with the Max-Plank Institute (Münich). Dr. Syed's group was first to interface an artificial semi-conductor chip with an identified neuronal network that was reconstructed on the chip. This research now opens a new avenue whereby we would be able to fabricate neurocomputers with living cells that amend semi-conductor chips or to implant microchips in the brain for medical prosthetics.

Dr. Syed, has been invited to address over 90 various institutions and organizations around the world including the Graduate School of Science, Hokkaido University, Japan in 1996 and the Central European Conference of Neurobiology, Krakow, Poland in 2001. He has also published more than 100 books, chapters review and peer-reviewed journals and fulfilled a number of administrative responsibilities for scientific institutions across North America

Currently Dr. Syed, holds patents for Antiepileptic Screening, Peripheral Nerve Regeneration and Guided Growth Chip, all granted in 2005. He received his BSc (Hons) in Physiology and MSc in Neuromuscular Physiology from the University of Karachi, Pakistan and his PhD in Neurophysiology from the University of Leeds, England, UK.

Dr. Syed is the professor and head of the Department of Cell Biology & Anatomy, Research Director at the Hotchkiss Brain Institute and advisor to the Vice President of research on Biomedical Engineering in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Calgary. Dr. Syed was born in Canada in 1957, and resides in Calgary, Alberta presently.
www.cellbiology.ucalgary.ca

FREDDY WILL



Freddy Will was born in Freetown, Sierra Leone and grew up living in Liberia, The Gambia and Senegal in West Africa. He spent most of his adult years in New Jersey, USA and currently resides in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He started writing lyrics and music since the age of ten in Africa and eventually, he attended university in Philadelphia, USA where he majored in Chemistry and specialized in Phlebotomy.

As an adolescent and the oldest of four siblings, Freddy Will pursued a career in music. His influences are Michael Jackson, Bob Marley, Marvin Gaye, Naughty by Nature, Tupac Shakur, The Notorious BIG and Snoop Dogg. These were just a few genres of music he played in his household. A love of rap, combined with his experiences during the two civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, molded Freddy Will into a storyteller who could paint a picture with words. His keen interest in science, also led him to establish the Freddy Will Hope Foundation.

The Freddy Will Hope Foundation (FWHF) was founded on May 15th, 2006 by Hip Hop artist, producer, author and screenwriter Freddy Will in order to help facilitate the healthcare industry improve treatment and achieve advancement of research for possible cure of Oncology. The Foundation also aims to participate in Geriatric care while expanding the study on stem cells and the promises it holds towards the cure of several diseases including but not limited to paralysis.

Freddy Will has a long history in healthcare. While growing up in Monrovia and later on in Kakata, Liberia, West Africa, he played a vital role as a young member in the Hospital Outreach Ministry of his church. Lead by his mother, before the civil war erupted, it was in that environment that Freddy first picked up the guitar when he sang in the youth group. One of their responsibilities was to visit often impoverished patients in local hospitals to help provide spiritual and material support. Then years later in the United States, Freddy Will was fortunate to work with oncology patients as a Clinical Care Technician at Robertwood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, New Jersey. While he worked there, he was shocked to learn about the fierce fight against cancer. Freddy Will saw the devastating effects of cancer up close for the first time when he worked as a healthcare worker. Like the genocide of West Africa, he realized that cancer without intervention (by any means possible) would continue to take a huge toll on society

The FWHF was established to raise funds for research and participate in the improving healthcare industry while encouraging skilled volunteers to lend a hand where needed. Funds raised by the FWHF will be donated to charities, healthcare facilities (around the world starting in the U.S and Canada) and to researchers for further research to hopefully provide the proper bedside care, treatment and cure for patients who suffer from these specific illnesses.

To find out how you or your company, firm or foundation can donate, please go to the contact page of this website and fill in your information and comments. You will be contacted by one of our representatives from the Foundation.

Website: www.freddywill.com or MySpace: www.myspace.com/freddywill



Elephant Thoughts is a federally registered charitable organization directed and run by a team of teachers, school principals, international development professionals and volunteers. Our goal is to improve the lives and futures of children by providing them with the best educational tools available. At the same time we provide a forum for children everywhere to share, celebrate, and promote their unique cultures. Our dream is to ensure that children in Canada and around the world gain access to the resources they need to build brighter futures for themselves, their families and generations to come. About ninety percent of our resources are dedicated to Canadian initiatives.

Across Ontario, we teach exciting hands-on science programs in elementary schools to promote student interest in science and technology and education itself. In northern regions all across Canada, Elephant Thoughts teaches fun and engaging science lessons on First Nations Reserves in an effort to combat absenteeism and low graduation rates. Overseas, we enhance educational experiences in developing countries by donating school supplies, training teachers and building schools from the ground up.

Elephant Thoughts is a very unique charity that relies heavily on its volunteer resources. A variety of education professionals who are passionate about our mandate—including teachers, principals and professors, regularly volunteer to help make this organization highly specialized at creating effective programs that make a lasting difference in children's lives.

www.elephantthoughts.com