



MENSA[®] Education & Research FOUNDATION

2008–2009
International Report

Supporting and Encouraging Intelligence

This report highlights recent international activities of the Mensa Education & Research Foundation. An eight-page annual report prepared for the American Mensa audience plus additional information can be

found on the website at www.mensafoundation.org.

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

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.

International Awards

Recognizing the Exceptional

The Mensa Education & Research Foundation and Mensa International, Ltd. work together to oversee several programs open to Mensa members around the world. Highlights of some recent awards follow.

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).

Gross served for six years as President of the Gifted and Talented Children's Association of South Australia, and served on the seven-person Executive of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children from 1995–1999.

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.

Intellectual Benefits

The 2009 **International Award for Intellectual Benefits to Society** is being given to **Katerina Havlíčková** of Mensa Czech Republic. This award recognizes an international Mensa member for the application of intellectual abilities that result in a tangible benefit to society.

Katerina Havlíčková has dedicated a significant part of her professional life to systematic and relentless efforts to support and help gifted children.

She was one of the key persons who helped to create and establish the concept of systematic care for gifted children in her country. She was the person who fought passionately for bringing about many things which today's children and parents find to be commonplace, like psychological assessment of abilities, counseling, and individual education.

Research

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

Receiving an award as a junior researcher in the 2008–09 year is **Rosalin Arden**, King's College (London), for her article "Intelligence and Semen Quality are Positively Correlated", published in *Intelligence*.

Scholarships

The **International Scholarship Program** provides scholarships for international students enrolled at colleges or universities in the United States.

The international scholarship winner for 2009 is **Michael Tubby**, Christchurch, New Zealand, receiving \$1,000 (USD).

To keep you updated on the work of the Mensa Foundation, we've created a new online newsletter.

You can read issues of *Foundation News* at the following web address:

www.mensafoundation.org/foundationnews

Mensa Research Journal

Understanding Our Community

In cooperation with Mensa International, Ltd., the *Mensa Research Journal* (MRJ) is published three times a year, highlighting current and significant research and commentary on 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.”

Articles include those from nationally and internationally esteemed scholars. In addition, members of the international community are the authors of various 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. Additionally, a discounted rate for group subscriptions is now offered.

Some examples of articles in recent issues by non-U.S. authors are listed following.

Gifted in the Workplace

[Vol. 39, No. 2–Summer 2008]

“What happens when girls, gifted in science, grow up?” by Judy L. Lupart, Charlene J. Barva,

and M. Elizabeth Cannon, The University of Calgary, Canada.

“Job satisfaction and temperament structure of gifted people” by Malgorzata Siekanska, University School of Physical Education, Krakow, Poland, and Andrzej Sekowski, Catholic University of Lublin, Poland.

Artistic Intelligence

[Vol. 39, No. 3–Fall 2008]

“Personality, intelligence, and art” by Adrian Furnham and Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, University College London, United Kingdom.

“Music lessons enhance IQ” by E. Glenn Schellenberg, University of Toronto at Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

Awards for Excellence in Research

[Vol. 40, No. 1–Winter 2009]

“Processing of temporal and nontemporal information as predictors of psychometric intelligence: A structural-equation-modeling approach” by Nadine Helmbold, Stefan Troche, and Thomas Rammsayer, University of Bern, Switzerland.

“Hungry for life” by Awais Ashfaq, Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan.

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), including information on the Mensa for Kids website, resources, scholarships, and more.
- Continued to add content and enhance the **Mensa For Kids website** (www.mensaforkids.org) and provide funding. 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 website won a **bronze award** in the category of **Online Publishing—Design Excellence** from the Society of National Association Publications (SNAP).
- 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.

Conversations with Mensa

Discussing Interesting Topics

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

Podcasts are available for listening or download at 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 are listed below. Feel free to direct ideas for future podcasts to conversations@mensafoundation.org.



Women and Creativity

Entrepreneur, writer, and Mensan **Tarek Saab** converses 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.

Tarek was a popular contestant on *The Apprentice* television show; he has earned bachelor's degrees in liberal arts and electrical engineering.

Dr. Piirto is a Trustees' Professor at Ashland University in Ohio and Director of Talent Development Education, teaching in the departments of Curriculum and Instruction and in Educational Leadership.



The Art of the Bluff

Renowned actor and Mensan **Alan Rachins** discusses the area where psychology and poker intersect with internationally recognized poker professional **Howard Lederer**.

Rachins has earned both Emmy and Golden Globe nominations for his acting on two hit television shows; he has also worked as a writer and director.

Lederer is a professional poker player who has won two World Series of Poker bracelets and two World Poker Tour titles. He is nicknamed "The Professor" for his focused, calm demeanor at the poker table.



Taking Control of ADD

Mensa member **Robin Crawford**, an experienced educator and mother of twin Mensans, leads a discussion on Attention Deficit Disorder and steps to manage it with **Dr. Frank Lawlis**,

author of *The ADD Answer*.

Crawford is an experienced educator who spent years teaching adolescents in a residential psychiatric facility.

Lawlis is the supervisory psychologist for American Mensa and the primary contributing psychologist for the *Dr. Phil* television show.



Revolution in Cosmology

Heather Preston—a NASA researcher, astronomy instructor, and Mensan—discusses exciting developments and complex theories in cosmology with **George Musser**, editor for *Scientific American* magazine and the author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to String Theory*.

Preston is a research astronomer specializing in astroseismology, gas dynamics, and computational fluid dynamics.

Musser earned a Master of Science in Astronomy; his numerous professional awards include a National Magazine Award for editorial excellence and a Global Media Award from the Population Institute.



Reinventing Yourself

Mensa member and actor **Myles Jeffrey** talks to "verbivore" **Richard Lederer** about the lessons one can learn from a lifetime of successful evolutions.

Jeffrey has more than 30 television and movie credits; he is currently a student at UCLA.

Lederer is the author of more than 30 books about language, history, and humor. He has been named International Punster of the Year.