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**Bill Nye to receive RNASA’s 2016 Space Communicator Award**

**HOUSTON, Texas** (February 3, 2016). The Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) Foundation has selected Bill Nye, scientist, engineer, comedian, author and inventor to receive the prestigious 2016 Space Communicator Award. Nye is best known as “Bill Nye the Science Guy”.

A vocal advocate for space exploration, Nye is also the CEO of [The Planetary Society](http://www.planetary.org), the world’s largest space-interest group. Nye is being honored by RNASA for his passion and talent to engage and educate audiences on the benefits of space exploration and the discoveries that result. Under his leadership since 2010, the non-profit organization has seen an increase in membership and donations, allowing it to expand its efforts to advocate and educate, as well as fund exploration projects and citizen science activities.

Elliot Pulham, Chief Executive Officer of the Space Foundation who nominated Bill Nye said, “It is my honor to nominate Bill Nye

‘The Science Guy’ for the RNASA 2016 Space Communicator Award, for inspiring a new generation of space and science professionals, and tireless advocacy of space exploration and science literacy."

Nye said, “Space exploration brings out the best in us, it’s an honor to receive this award. I plan to continue my work advancing science literacy and space exploration, so that people everywhere can know the cosmos and our place in it.”

Nye is a man with a mission: to help foster a scientifically literate society, to help people everywhere understand and appreciate the science that makes our world work. Making science entertaining and accessible is something Nye has been doing most of his life.

Nye’s fascination with how bicycles, airplanes and other things work led him to Cornell University and a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1977. Soon after graduating, Boeing recruited him as an engineer in Seattle, Washington. It was in Seattle that Nye began to combine his love of science with his flair for comedy. Eventually, Nye quit his engineering day job and made the transition to a night job as a comedy writer and performer on Seattle’s homegrown ensemble comedy show “Almost Live” in 1986.

It was there “Bill Nye the Science Guy®” was born, as a six-minute segment highlighting science. The popularity of the segments led to the educational television series that ran from 1993 to 1998.

While working on the Science Guy show, Nye won seven national Emmy Awards for writing, performing, and producing. The show won 18 Emmys in five years. In between creating the shows, he wrote five kids’ books about science: "Big Blast of Science", "Bill Nye's Consider the Following", "Bill Nye The Science Guy's Big Blue Ocean”, “Bill Nye The Science Guy’s Great Big Dinosaur Dig” and “Bill Nye The Science Guy’s Great Big Book of Tiny Germs”.

Nye’s first book for a general audience, “Undeniable – Evolution and the Science of Creation,” was featured on the New York Times’ Bestsellers List. Nye’s most recent book, “Unstoppable-- Harnessing Science to Change the World,” takes on the subjects of energy and climate change.

The RNASA Space Communicator Award was created in 1997 in honor of KTRK, Houston Channel 13 space reporter and long-time RNASA Advisor Stephen Gauvain who was tragically killed in a car accident in 1996. The Award is presented to an individual or team that makes exceptional contributions to public understanding and appreciation of space exploration. Previous recipients include: William Harwood of CBS; Miles O'Brien, formerly of CNN; Elliot Pulham of the Space Foundation; the NASA-Contractor Communications team that responded to the Columbia accident; Mark Carreau, formerly of the Houston Chronicle; Neil deGrasse Tyson of the Hayden Planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, Veronica McGregor, Manager of News and Social Media at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, and former [Canadian Space Agency astronaut, author, and musician Chris A. Hadfield](http://www.asc-csa.gc.ca/eng/missions/expedition34-35/profile.asp).

Nye will be honored with the 2016 Space Communicator Award at RNASA’s 30th annual National Space Trophy Banquet on April 29, 2016, at the Houston Hyatt Regency. Dr. Charles Elachi, Director of NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, will receive the 2016 National Space Trophy. The award gala will be emceed by Miles O’Brien, science correspondent for PBS NewsHour, Author and satirist P.J. O’Rourke will be a featured speaker.

The RNASA Foundation invites members of the public and the aerospace community to attend the black-tie event on April 29, 2016, at the Houston Hyatt Regency. Please visit [**http://www.rnasa.org/tables.html**](http://www.rnasa.org/tables.html)to reserve your table for the RNASA Banquet and find information about sponsorships and tickets. To reserve a room at the Houston Hyatt Regency, please visit [**http://www.rnasa.org/houston.html**](http://www.rnasa.org/houston.html)or call 713-654-1234 and request the RNASA group rate. The RNASA website is [**http://www.rnasa.org/**](http://www.rnasa.org/)**.**

*About RNASA: The Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) Foundation was founded by the Space Center Rotary Club of Houston, Texas in 1985 to organize and coordinate an annual event to recognize outstanding achievements in space and create greater public awareness of the benefits of space exploration. The nonprofit Foundation presents the National Space Trophy and Stellar Awards each year.*

Caption for photo:

The Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) Foundation has selected Bill Nye, scientist, engineer, comedian, author and inventor to receive the prestigious 2016 Space Communicator Award. Nye has helped increase public support for space exploration through activities and outreach in his role as CEO of the Planetary Society.