



NSF SPEAKERS

September 27, 2017



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George Gilchrist

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George Gilchrist is an evolutionary biologist (B.S. Arizona State 1982, M. Sc. Brown University 1985, Ph.D. University of Washington 1993). His research examines organismal adaptations to climate change in space and time. He studies contemporary evolution across latitudinal gradients in Europe, Chile, and North America, coupled with experimental evolution studies to identify key adaptations to the thermal environment. George also does mathematical and computational modeling of evolutionary forces imposed by seasonal environments. He held faculty positions at Clarkson University (Potsdam, NY) and The College of William and Mary (Williamsburg, VA) before coming to NSF in 2009 as a permanent program officer in the Evolutionary Processes Cluster of the Division of Environmental Biology.



Richard Schwerdtfeger

ENG— Engineering
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Richard Schwerdtfeger started at NSF in Aug 2016 as an SBIR program director. His areas include semiconductors, photonics, and Internet of Things. He has 25+ years of experience as a scientist and entrepreneur. His focus has been on the development and commercialization of clean energy, semiconductor, and clean water technologies. In addition to being an NSF program director, he is currently on the advisory boards of three start-up companies: Alt-E Fund, Clear Cove Systems, and Grox Industries. Prior to that, he was the CTO and co-founder of ARC Energy where he developed technology that helped drive \$150+ million in sales and nearly \$500 million in backlog in four years. He also starting a China field office in six months and spent nearly two years living and working in China for ARC Energy. He started his career as a scientist at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.



Beth Strausser

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Beth Strausser has been a member of BFA's Policy Office team since 1998 where she is a senior policy specialist responsible for policy formulation and implementation and also conducts various outreach meetings for public and private sector research and grants administration officials. She responds to phone and e-mail inquiries from the external community and is involved in the design and beta-testing of many of NSF's internal and external electronic proposal and award systems. She came to NSF in 1991 and was first a grants officer in the NSF Division of Grants and Agreements where she negotiated, evaluated and managed high-profile, complex grants and cooperative agreements. Beth holds a Masters of Public Administration from American University, an A.B. in Political Science from Bryn Mawr College, and has completed coursework at the University of Surrey in England. She is a past board member of the National Grants Management Association and has received NSF Director's Awards for Program Management Excellence, Administrative Excellence and Collaborative Integration.



Alejandro "Al" Suarez

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Al Suarez is an assistant program director supporting large cooperative agreements within OAC. Suarez is a computational physicist by training, with a background in surface science and the chemical modification of graphene. Alejandro hold a B.S. in applied physics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a Ph.D. in physics from Penn State University. He has also served as a National Research Council postdoctoral associate at the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory and a AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow at NSF.



Lisa-Joy Zgorski

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Lisa-Joy Zgorski is a public affairs specialist and NSF Days lead. Since joining the NSF in 2007, she has received Director's Awards for work with CISE, EHR and the National Science Board. Her other beats have included NSF's International office, SBE, Physics and Astronomy. Lisa-Joy served as a legislative aide for U.S. Rep. Barbara Kennelly (CT); press secretary for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and (then-gubernatorial candidate) Gov. Dan Malloy of Connecticut, and as a public affairs specialist in the press offices of Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, the Office of Management and Budget and The Century Foundation. She holds an MPP, Harvard Kennedy School of Government; a B.A., Mount Holyoke College; and certificates in policy studies from Dartmouth College and the Charles University Law Faculty in Prague.