

2022 COMMENCEMENT

Richard Gilder Graduate School

Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Arts in Teaching

The Richard Gilder Graduate School is located at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. It houses two graduate programs, each the first and only freestanding program of its kind in the Western Hemisphere: the Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Biology and the Master of Arts in Teaching Earth Science.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The pioneering Ph.D. program in comparative biology educates the next generation of biologists through an integrated approach that focuses on the history, evolutionary relationships, and interactions among organisms. Training and research opportunities exist across a wide array of disciplines in comparative biology, incorporating research in comparative genomics, computational biology, systematic and evolutionary biology, paleontology, conservation biology, Earth history, anthropology, and biological and cultural diversity.

Students in the doctoral program study with the Museum's internationally recognized scientific faculty. Through formal coursework and independent research, students in the comparative biology program can investigate the Museum's world-renowned collections of more than 34 million specimens and artifacts, including the Ambrose Monell Collection for Molecular and Microbial Research, and also have access to the Museum's natural history library and scientific laboratories. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these resources proved invaluable, providing critically important samples when travel restrictions curtailed the additional research opportunities typically available to Ph.D. students via global fieldwork with Museum faculty.

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING

The Master of Arts in Teaching Earth Science residency program furthers the Museum's long history of leadership in teacher education and professional development. Initially authorized by the New York State Education Department, the program is funded in part by the National Science Foundation, the United States Department of Education, and The Shelby Cullom Davis Charitable Fund. This program addresses a critical shortage of qualified Earth science teachers, particularly in high-needs schools with diverse populations, by providing a specialization in Earth science for teachers of Grades 7–12. Working in partnership with schools in New York City and Yonkers, the program is developed and delivered in the context of both a natural history museum and public schools.

The Museum expresses its utmost appreciation to the late Richard Gilder, a steadfast and most generous benefactor and friend whose visionary philanthropy enabled the Museum to establish the Gilder Graduate School.

Additional support for the Richard Gilder Graduate School has been generously provided by the Hess Foundation, Inc.; an anonymous Museum Trustee; the City of New York; Louis V. Gerstner, Jr., the Gerstner Family Foundation; the National Science Foundation; the Annette Kade Charitable Trust; and the Maxwell Hanrahan Foundation.

With deepest appreciation, the Museum acknowledges Kathryn W. Davis for her generous founding support of the Master of Arts in Science Teaching (MAT) Program. Leadership support for the MAT program is provided by The Shelby Cullom Davis Charitable Fund.

Generous support has been provided by the Bezos Family Foundation.

The MAT program is supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education under Grant Number U336S190042 and the National Science Foundation under Grant Number DUE-1852787.

Support for the MAT program's Fessenden Fellows has been provided by Nancy B. and Hart Fessenden.

Additional support has been provided by The Rice Family Foundation.

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"Pomp and Circumstance March #1 in D," Edward Elgar

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"The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba," George F. Handel

HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT



THEODORE A. MATHAS

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AND RETIRED CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER New York Life Insurance Company

THEODORE A. MATHAS: Advocate for science and education, philanthropist, business leader, and extraordinary Trustee of the American Museum of Natural History, you are an inspiring model of civic engagement of the highest order.

BORN IN NORFOLK, VIRGINIA, you received an A.B. degree from Stanford University, with distinction, and a J.D. degree from the University of Virginia, where you were a member of the Virginia Law Review and the distinguished scholastic society the Order of the Coif.

ADMIRED EXECUTIVE, you have been a highly effective corporate leader, most notably, from 2008 to 2022, as Chairman and CEO, and now Chairman of the Board, of New York Life, the nation's largest mutual life insurer and the leading provider of life insurance and income annuities in the U.S. You have served twice as chair of the American Council of Life Insurers and sit on the boards of the Partnership for New York City, New York Digital Investment Group, and the Law School Foundation at the University of Virginia.

PASSIONATE BENEFACTOR AND ADVOCATE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, together with your wife Keryn and in partnership of the New York Life Foundation, you have applied your intellect, energy, and resources to support education and programs that benefit youth at a number of institutions, including, importantly, providing educational opportunities for underserved students as well as childhood bereavement support. Under your leadership, New York Life has contributed generously to foundational educational programs at the American Museum of Natural History. These include longstanding support for Youth Initiatives, and, in the new Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation, support for a classroom in the Middle School Learning Zone. Reflecting your example, the New York Life Foundation has been one of the Museum's most steadfast corporate partners.

EXCEPTIONAL TRUSTEE, at the American Museum of Natural History, you have been a shining model of volunteer non-profit leadership, sharing your great intellect and experience and providing wisdom, counsel, and time, while serving on both the Officers and Executive Committees and in the critical roles of Vice Chair (previously Treasurer) and Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee through economically challenging and volatile times, most notably during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping to safeguard the Museum as it navigated unprecedented waters and to fortify it for the future.

And so, with great admiration, the Richard Gilder Graduate School of the American Museum of Natural History honors you for your exemplary service and contributions to education and society by conferring on you the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters *Honoris Causa*, with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto.

HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT



DONALD ROSWELL HOPKINS

Special Advisor for Guinea Worm Eradication, Former Vice President for Health The Carter Center

DONALD ROSWELL HOPKINS: Leading expert in parasitology, tropical disease epidemiology, and global public health, you are a brilliant, successful warrior against pervasive health scourges in some of the most disadvantaged places. In these ways, you embody the mission and work of the American Museum of Natural History.

BORN IN MIAMI, FLORIDA, you were awarded the Bachelor of Science degree from Morehouse College, Doctor of Medicine from the University of Chicago, and Master of Public Health from Harvard University. During a distinguished career in academia and government you were appointed assistant professor of tropical public health at the Harvard School of Public Health, directed the U.S. Public Health Service's assistance to Sierra Leone's Smallpox Eradication/Measles Control Program, and served as deputy director and acting director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

COURAGEOUS EPIDEMIOLOGIST, you played a key role in the eradication of smallpox, the first human disease ever to be wiped out. In 1987, you joined President Jimmy Carter's Carter Center to lead efforts to eradicate Guinea worm disease, today standing on the brink of elimination in humans. Under your leadership, the Center hosted the International Task Force on Disease Eradication and added programs to eliminate and control other neglected tropical diseases. You have brought perseverance, sensitivity, and optimism to highly formidable challenges in global public health, including as a member of seven U.S. delegations to the World Health Assembly.

VALUED COLLEAGUE AND COMMUNICATOR, you were critical to the development of the Museum's powerful exhibition in partnership with the Carter Center, *Countdown to Zero*, about efforts to eradicate Guinea worm disease. Prolific writer for scientific journals, textbooks, and the general public, your book *Princes and Peasants: Smallpox in History*, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 1983.

WIDELY HONORED PUBLIC FIGURE, you have received many commendations, including the CDC Medal of Excellence, Distinguished Service Medal of the U.S. Public Health Service, and Pumphandle Award from the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists. Honored as a MacArthur Fellow in 1995, you were elected a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences and American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

For your influential scientific research and extraordinary success in the eradication of smallpox, neareradication of Guinea worm disease, and similar efforts against many other devastating diseases, you are rightly considered an international hero.

And so, with great admiration, the Richard Gilder Graduate School of the American Museum of Natural History honors you for your leadership in science and your lifelong global service to human health by conferring on you the degree of Doctor of Science *Honoris Causa*, with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto.

HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT



ROBERT MILLER HAZEN

SENIOR STAFF SCIENTIST Earth & Planets Laboratory, Carnegie Institution

CLARENCE ROBINSON PROFESSOR OF EARTH SCIENCES, Emeritus George Mason University

ROBERT MILLER HAZEN: Pioneering mineralogist, you have revolutionized the study and classification of minerals, through a cross-disciplinary approach that exploits "big data" mineral resources to develop new understanding of the history and composition of planet Earth, minerals fostering and interacting with life, and the formation and nature of minerals beyond Earth. In this way, you embody the work and mission of the American Museum of Natural History.

BORN IN ROCKVILLE CENTER, NEW YORK, you often visited the Museum as a child before receiving Earth Science Bachelor and Master of Science degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Ph.D. in Mineralogy and Crystallography from Harvard University and serving as a NATO Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Cambridge.

INNOVATIVE AND INSIGHTFUL MINERALOGIST, your novel approach organizes minerals based on when and how they originated, and you are shaping the emerging fields of mineral ecology and mineral evolution by detailing the origins and diversity of the 6,000 known minerals on Earth such as those displayed in the Museum's Mignone Halls of Gems and Minerals, in a landmark body of work that will help reconstruct the history of life on Earth, guide the search for new minerals and deposits essential to society, and aid in the discovery of extraterrestrial minerals.

GLOBAL SCIENTIFIC LEADER, you are Principal Investigator and Executive Director of the Deep Carbon Observatory, an international effort to advance understanding of the chemical and biological roles of carbon on Earth, with more than 1,000 collaborators globally.

PROLIFIC AND HIGHLY ACCLAIMED SCHOLAR and talented professional symphonic trumpet player, you have authored hundreds of scholarly works on science, history, and music, including *The Story of Earth*, a finalist in the Royal Society and Phi Beta Kappa science book competitions. You are a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Geochemical Society, and Geological Society of America. The Mineralogical Society of America bestowed on you its highest award, the Roebling Medal, as well as its MSA Award and Distinguished Public Service Medal, and the bio-mineral "hazenite" was named in your honor.

COMPELLING SCIENCE COMMUNICATOR AND EDUCATOR, you have been active in science education and policy, contributing to the National Science Education Standards and writing the bestselling Science Matters: Achieving Scientific Literacy and The Sciences: An Integrated Approach.

As a scientific investigator, your work strives to bridge the gap between geological and biological systems to foster a more holistic, integrated, and powerful understanding of Earth and life on our planet.

And so, with great admiration, the Richard Gilder Graduate School of the American Museum of Natural History honors you for your extraordinary contributions as a scientist, educator, and leader by conferring on you the degree of Doctor of Science *Honoris Causa*, with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto.

RICHARD GILDER GRADUATE SCHOOL DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

COMPARATIVE BIOLOGY

RICHARD BENJAMIN SULSER

St. Louis, Missouri University of Chicago, B.S., Biological Sciences (2016)

Dissertation:

AN ISLAND APART: SENSORY DISPARITY IN PHENOTYPE
AND GENOTYPE WITHIN THE TENRECOMORPHA

Defense Date: February 15, 2022 Advisor: Ross D. E. MacPhee, Ph.D.

MAGGS X

Sparta, New Jersey
Columbia University, M.A., Conservation Biology (2017)
Manhattan College, B.A., Biology (2015)

Dissertation:

GENOMIC EVOLUTION OF THE FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM AND PARITY MODES IN SNAKES

> Defense Date: May 6, 2022 Advisor: Cheryl Y. Hayashi, Ph.D.

JOHANNES SEBASTIAN NEUMANN

Lübeck, Germany Leibniz Universität Hannover, B.S., Biology (2017)

Dissertation:

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO COMPARATIVE ANIMAL BIOLOGY WITH FOCUS ON PLACOZOA

> Defense Date: May 13, 2022 Advisor: Robert DeSalle, Ph.D. Co-Advisor: Eunsoo Kim, Ph.D.

JAMES GASPARE NAPOLI

Setauket, New York Stony Brook University, M.S., Physiology and Biophysics (2018) Brown University, B.S., Geology-Biology (2017)

Dissertation:

UNCERTAINTY AND VARIATION IN THE DINOSAUR FOSSIL RECORD

Defense Date: June 7, 2022 Advisor: John J. Flynn, Ph.D. Co-Advisor: Jin Meng, Ph.D.

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