News

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Leshner Receives Presidential Nomination to Serve on National Science Board

Leshner

APS Fellow and Charter Member **Alan I. Leshner**, chief executive officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, or AAAS, is among eight people nominated by President Bush to serve on the National Science Board.

Leshner has been CEO of AAAS and executive publisher of the journal Science since December 2001. From 1994 to 2001, he served as director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and before that, as deputy director and acting director of the National Institute of Mental Health. Prior to his appointment at NIMH, he held a variety of senior positions at the National Science Foundation, focusing on basic research in the biological, behavioral and social sciences, science policy and science education.

Earlier, Leshner spent 10 years at Bucknell University, where he was professor of psychology. His research has focused on the biological bases of behavior.

The National Science Board was established by Congress in 1950 to oversee and guide the activities of, and establish policies for, the National Science Foundation. It also serves as an independent national science policy body that provides advice to the President and the Congress on policy issues related to science and engineering.

The Board has 24 members appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, plus the NSF director as an ex-officio member. The terms of the eight nominees would run until May 2010.

Lerner Honored at White House

Lerner

APS Member **Jennifer S. Lerner**, Carnegie Mellon University, recently received the National Science Foundation's prestigious Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) at a White House ceremony. The PECASE program recognizes outstanding scientists and engineers who, early in their careers, show exceptional potential for leadership at the frontiers of knowledge. It is the highest national honor for researchers in the early stages of their careers.

"This award is a testament to [Lerner's] talents and hard work, as well as a tribute to Carnegie Mellon's interdisciplinary approach to research and education," Carnegie Mellon Provost Mark Kamlet said.

Lerner is head of the Emotion and Decision Laboratory at Carnegie Mellon. Drawing primarily on psychology as well as economics and neuroscience, the lab examines the influence of emotion on human thought and action. Lerner's recent work revolves around two domains: judgments of risk and choices in economic transactions. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Lerner and her colleagues found that Americans who experience anger over the attacks are more optimistic about the future, less likely to take precautionary actions, and more likely to favor aggressive responses than those who experience fear.

More recently, Lerner authored a ground-breaking study that found that seemingly incidental emotions can influence the prices at which individuals buy and sell goods. Lerner's research revealed that people who are sad are willing to accept less money to sell something than they would pay for the same object. The study was published in the May 2004 issue of *Psychological Science*, and can be read at www.psychologicalscience.org/journals/.