

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Academy Honors Jay Bhattacharya, Nicholas Christakis, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Others at Library of Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On October 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Great Hall of the Library of Congress, luminaries from across the arts and sciences gathered for a gala held by the [American Academy of Sciences and Letters](#) (the Academy), a learned society promoting excellence in scholarship and intellectual courage in the arts, sciences, and learned professions. The Academy awarded the Robert J. Zimmer Medal for Intellectual Freedom to Dr. Jay Bhattacharya of Stanford University, and ten 2024 Barry Prizes for outstanding achievement in scholarship, which each come with a \$50,000 prize. A new class of Academy members, including Steven Pinker, Sir Niall Ferguson, Cass Sunstein, and two Nobel-laureate scientists, was also invested at the ceremony.

“Last year we were delighted to honor Sir Salman Rushdie alongside other top minds of our time, and this year we are delighted to honor Jay Bhattacharya and a wonderful group of outstanding scholars,” said **Academy President Dr. Donald Landry**, M.D., Ph.D., who is also the Hamilton Southworth Professor of Medicine at Columbia University. “Like other academies, we honor intellectual excellence, but our Academy is distinguished by a special accent on intellectual courage. Jay Bhattacharya has sacrificed his own self-interest to protect open inquiry, and all our prize winners and new members this year reflect the independence of mind we strive to honor.”

The Academy’s **Robert J. Zimmer Medal for Intellectual Freedom**, named for the late President of the University of Chicago and a stalwart defender of academic freedom, is presented annually to an individual who displays extraordinary courage in the exercise of intellectual freedom. The Medal’s inaugural recipient was Sir Salman Rushdie in 2023. This year’s recipient, Jay Bhattacharya, participated in an on-stage interview with Professor Stephen Macedo of Princeton University, in which he discussed how he resisted attempts to exercise political control of his scientific work during the pandemic.

**The Barry Prizes**, awarded at \$50,000 each, are the Academy’s marquee initiative to promote excellence in scholarship. The prestigious annual honor, open to scholars across diverse fields and disciplines, celebrates extraordinary achievement and unwavering commitment to excellence within the arts, sciences, and learned professions. Recipients are nominated by the members of the Academy and appointed by the board of directors.

### 2024 Barry Prize Recipients

**Akhil Reed Amar**, Yale University (Law)  
**Gary A. Anderson**, University of Notre Dame (Theology)  
**Marianne Bertrand**, University of Chicago (Economics)  
**Nicholas A. Christakis**, Yale University (Medicine & Sociology)  
**Brian Conrad**, Stanford University (Mathematics)  
**Henry Louis Gates, Jr.**, Harvard University (English)

**Jeannie Suk Gersen**, Harvard University (Law)  
**William Chester Jordan**, Princeton University (History)  
**Karin I. Öberg**, Harvard University (Astronomy)  
**Megan Sykes**, Columbia University (Medicine)

In addition to these ten Barry Prize winners, who become Academy members upon receiving the award, the Academy also **invested fifty other scholars as members of the Academy**. This year's new member class includes psychologist Steven Pinker, historian Sir Niall Ferguson (who was knighted earlier this year for his services to literature), legal scholar Cass Sunstein, and two Nobel-laureate scientists – chemist Arieh Warshel and biochemist Jennifer Doudna. Sir Salman Rushdie was also invested as a member at this year's ceremony, as were this year's Barry Prize and Zimmer Medal recipients. A complete list appears below.

### **Scholars Invested as Academy Members on Oct. 23, 2024**

**Susan C. Alberts**, Robert F. Durden Distinguished Professor of Biology and Evolutionary Anthropology, Duke University

**Danielle Allen**, James Bryant Conant University Professor, Harvard University

**Akhil Reed Amar**, Sterling Professor of Law and Political Science, Yale University

**Gary A. Anderson**, Hesburgh Professor of Catholic Thought, University of Notre Dame

**Clifford Ando**, Robert O. Anderson Distinguished Service Professor; Professor of Classics, History and in the College; University of Chicago

**Daniel Asia**, Professor of Composition and Head of the Composition Department, University of Arizona Fred Fox School of Music

**Leora Batnitzky**, Perelman Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Religion, Princeton University

**Peter Berkowitz**, Tad and Dianne Taube Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University

**Marianne Bertrand**, Chris P. Dialynas Distinguished Service Professor of Economics, University of Chicago Booth School of Business

**Jay Bhattacharya**, Professor of Health Policy, Stanford University School of Medicine

**Clifford P. Brangwynne**, June K. Wu '92 Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering; HHMI Investigator; Founding Director, Omenn-Darling Bioengineering Institute; Princeton University

**Arthur C. Brooks**, Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Public and Nonprofit Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School; Professor of Management Practice, Harvard Business School

**Alex Byrne**, Laurance S. Rockefeller Professor of Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**Paolo G. Carozza**, Professor of Law and Concurrent Professor of Political Science, University of Notre Dame

**Arul M. Chinnaiyan**, Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator, American Cancer Society Research Professor, and S.P. Hicks Endowed Professor of Pathology and Urology, University of Michigan

**Nicholas A. Christakis**, Sterling Professor of Social and Natural Science, Yale University

**J. Christopher Clemens**, Executive Vice Chancellor, Provost, and Jaroslav Folda Distinguished Professor of Physics and Astronomy, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

**Brian Conrad**, Professor of Mathematics, Stanford University

**Judith A. Curry**, Professor Emerita of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Georgia Institute of Technology

**Percy Deift**, Silver Professor of Mathematics, Courant Institute, New York University

**Jennifer A. Doudna**, Nobel Laureate; Li Ka Shing Chancellor's Chair and Professor in the Departments of Chemistry and of Molecular and Cell Biology, University of California-Berkeley; Founder, Innovative Genomics Institute

**Jeffrey Eugenides**, Lewis and Loretta Glucksman Professor in English and American Letters, New York University

**Sir Niall Ferguson**, Milbank Family Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University

**Richard W. Garnett**, Paul J. Schierl/Fort Howard Professor of Law, University of Notre Dame

**Henry Louis Gates, Jr.**, Alphonse Fletcher University Professor, Harvard University

**Jeannie Suk Gersen**, John H. Watson, Jr. Professor of Law, Harvard University

**Philip Hamburger**, Maurice and Hilda Friedman Professor of Law, Columbia University

**James Hankins**, Professor of History, Harvard University

**Bernard Haykel**, Professor of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University

**Helen H. Hobbs**, Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Professor of Internal Medicine and Molecular Genetics, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

**Oliver Hobert**, Professor of Biological Sciences and of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics, Columbia University

**William G. Howell**, Sydney Stein Professor of American Politics, University of Chicago

**Caroline M. Hoxby**, Scott and Donya Bommer Professor in Economics, Stanford University

**Wayne L. Hubbell**, Jules Stein Professor of Ophthalmology and Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, University of California-Los Angeles

**Alexandru D. Ionescu**, Professor of Mathematics, Princeton University

**William Chester Jordan**, Dayton-Stockton Professor of History Emeritus, and Director of the Program in Medieval Studies, Princeton University

**Lee Jussim**, Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Rutgers University-New Brunswick

**Steven Justice**, Professor Emeritus of English, University of California-Berkeley

**Brian G. Keating**, Chancellor's Distinguished Professor of Physics, University of California-San Diego

**Isaac Kohane**, Marion V. Nelson Professor of Biomedical Informatics, Harvard Medical School

**Frances Lee**, Professor of Politics and Public Affairs, Princeton University

**Stephen Macedo**, Laurance S. Rockefeller Professor of Politics, Princeton University

**Bertha Kalifon Madras**, Professor of Psychobiology, Harvard Medical School

**Karin I. Öberg**, Thomas Dudley Cabot Professor of the Natural Sciences, Harvard University

**Steven Pinker**, Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology, Harvard University

**H. Vincent Poor**, Michael Henry Strater University Professor, Princeton University

**Sir Salman Rushdie**, Novelist

**Christian Smith**, Wm. R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Sociology, University of Notre Dame

**Geoffrey R. Stone**, Edward H. Levi Distinguished Professor of Law, University of Chicago

**Barry Stuart Strauss**, Corliss Page Dean Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University; Bryce and Edith M. Bowmar Professor in Humanistic Studies, Emeritus, Cornell University

**Jenny Strauss Clay**, William Kenan Professor of Classics Emerita, University of Virginia

**Cass R. Sunstein**, Robert Walmsley University Professor, Harvard University

**Megan Sykes**, Michael J. Friedlander Professor of Medicine, Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, Professor of Surgical Sciences, and Director of the Columbia Center for Translational Immunology, Columbia University

**Salvatore Torquato**, Lewis Bernard Professor of Natural Sciences, Princeton University

**Noël Valis**, Kingman Brewster, Jr. Professor of Spanish and Portuguese, Yale University

**Tyler J. VanderWeele**, John L. Loeb and Frances Lehman Loeb Professor of Epidemiology, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health; Director, Human Flourishing Program; Harvard University

**Arieh Warshel**, Nobel Laureate; Distinguished Professor of Chemistry, University of Southern California

**Keith E. Whittington**, David Boies Professor of Law, Yale University

**Luigi Zingales**, Robert C. McCormack Distinguished Service Professor of Entrepreneurship and Finance, and Faculty Director of the Stigler Center for the Study of the Economy and the State, University of Chicago

**Huda Y. Zoghbi**, Distinguished Service Professor, Baylor College of Medicine; Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Founding Director, Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute at Texas Children's Hospital

## **About the Academy**

The American Academy of Sciences and Letters promotes scholarship and honors outstanding achievement in the arts, sciences, and learned professions. It encourages the fruitful exchange of ideas within academia and society at large by sponsoring occasions for scholarly interaction and providing platforms for the presentation and dissemination of scholarship in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, and engineering. An independent 501(c)(3) non-partisan organization, it offers public programming, supports promising young scholars, and promotes traditional liberal arts ideals and standards of intellectual excellence.

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