



# NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Office of the President

October 17, 2019

Dear Colleague:

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) was founded to serve the nation and to recognize and promote the best science for the benefit of all humanity. That charge is no less vital to furthering the scientific enterprise today than it was when Abraham Lincoln signed the Act that incorporated the NAS in 1863. The convening power of the Academy uniquely positions us to lead efforts addressing urgent issues such as insufficient science literacy, lack of diversity in the scientific workforce, and public policy decisions that ignore scientific evidence. You understand the importance of having an authoritative voice that provides advice and guidance on solving these pressing problems. The philanthropic support of our members and friends is instrumental in continuing our vital work. I want to highlight some of the many ways in which we promote the best science for the nation and the world—in our strategic planning and our public outreach programs.

Your contribution to the NAS is a clear statement of support and investment in our work. I firmly believe that it is our obligation to ensure we make the best use of the resources provided by our members and friends. That is why the NAS has just completed a strategic planning process—the first in its 156-year history—that brings to life our vision of a nation and world in which people understand that science is foundational to their lives. The goals and objectives outlined in this new strategic plan will better ensure that your crucial support of the NAS is having the greatest possible impact. **I hope you will join me in making an Annual Fund contribution to support our new strategic direction and continued public outreach efforts.**

The NAS recognizes that a key component of promoting the best science must be effective communication—a need that has never been greater. Communication and engagement projects such as *The Science Behind It*, our recently released web and digital media effort, are designed with everyday people in mind. Launched last month, *The Science Behind It* tackles questions related to how science, engineering, and medicine touch our lives every day through brief, easily understood, evidence-based answers. The project currently highlights topics ranging from immigration and climate change to cybersecurity and space exploration. I hope you will follow along at [www.thesciencebehindit.org](http://www.thesciencebehindit.org) as new topics and resources are released over the coming weeks.

Thanks to your support, the NAS can host programs like *From Research to Reward*, which illustrates real-life examples of scientific discoveries that may not appear to have immediate impact. Recently, a new short film from the program featured economists who are working to create better outcomes for America's children by analyzing decades of anonymized tax, census, and Social Security

records. The theme of scientific research as a vital component in improving our economy, society, and world is woven throughout the program's vignettes.

This fall, the NAS is partnering with the Kavli Foundation and the Simons Foundation to stage an inspiring day of TED talks featuring 15 speakers who will focus on a wide range of topics spanning the sciences. Through this collaboration and others, we aim to raise the visibility of the NAS as a venue for exciting and engaging programs that give us the opportunity to attract audiences who might otherwise opt out of conversations about science.

Your contribution ensures that the NAS continues to be a trusted authority on a broad range of issues related to science and technology. Together, we must ensure that science always has a strong and effective voice. Unlike higher education institutions or advocacy associations, the NAS is uniquely positioned to remain the leading independent voice to address today's most pressing issues around science and technology. But we need the support of our members and friends to continue our work. **Join me today and make a gift to the NAS Annual Fund. Your support and participation truly make a difference.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcia McNutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Marcia McNutt  
President