



Robin Marantz Henig



Laura Helmuth



Jill Adams



Deborah Franklin

# NASW Board Election Candidate Statements

*Election of the 2015-16 NASW board takes place this year, online or in-person, in late August (see back cover). In addition to four officers, the board consists of 11 members at large. The nominating committee of Terry Devitt, Bob Finn, Kathleen Raven, Jennifer Ouellette, Nancy Shute (chair), and Ron Winslow has assembled an outstanding slate of candidates.*

## President Candidate

**Robin Marantz Henig** (freelance)

**R**on Winslow will be a tough act to follow. As the incoming NASW President, I hope to focus on some of the ongoing projects the organization has mounted in the name of greater diversity, both in our membership and in the science writing profession as a whole. This means making NASW more welcoming to science writers from minority groups, which is the impetus behind the “diversity mixer” we’ll be holding at our annual conference in October. We also hope to mount some outreach efforts to attract more persons of color into the profession, which will include sending NASW delegations to the meetings of groups like the National Association of Black Journalists. Greater diversity also means greater gender diversity, and another goal of my presidency will be to make science writing a safe and professional environment

for women. This will be a continuation of work begun at the 2013 annual conference with “The XX Question” panel, which focused on the then-emerging awareness of sexual harassment in the field. That panel led to the next step in this effort, the Solutions Summit 2014: Women in Science Writing, held at MIT in June. I hope to provide leadership to be sure this work continues. With our first-ever all-women slate of officers and an ever-enthusiastic board of directors, I’m looking forward to a really exciting and productive two years!

## Vice President Candidate

**Laura Helmuth** (Slate)

**T**he most important responsibility of the vice president, who also chairs the programs committee, is to organize the annual NASW workshops for the ScienceWriters conference. I hope to make the annual meeting as useful, productive, and convenient as possible for NASW members. I and the programs committee are planning to experiment with additional NASW events throughout the year and find other ways to serve members who are unable to attend ScienceWriters. I’ve been a board member and member of the programs committee for the past term. I have pushed for better representation of women and minorities in the science writing community, been an advocate for freelancers, and tried to demystify and improve the editor-freelancer relationship. I am the science and health editor for *Slate* magazine in Washington, D.C. I previously worked as the science editor at *Smithsonian* magazine and before that as an editor and writer for *Science* magazine’s news department and ScienceNOW. I have a Ph.D. in cognitive neuroscience from the University of California, Berkeley, and went through the UC Santa Cruz science communication

program. I have served on the board of the D.C. Science Writers Association and am on the board of advisers for The Open Notebook.

## Treasurer Candidate

**Jill Adams** (freelance)

**I** truly believe that one of the great benefits of NASW is sharing stories and strategies for success with other professional science writers. During my first term on the board, I tried to be a voice for science writers who want to take charge of their careers. Whether freelancers or staffers, all of us benefit from having information and resources at the ready via NASW-supported efforts. I’ve contributed to *The Science Writers’ Handbook*, *The Open Notebook*, and helped launch the contracts database *The Fine Print*. I will continue to support creative regional meetings organized by NASW members, often funded by Idea Grants. I’m in favor of efforts to promote international outreach efforts and, at home, to increase the welcoming nature of our community to science writers of all colors, creeds, and genders. A long-term freelancer, I write about health, medicine, and the environment for the *Washington Post*, *Audubon*, *Nature*, *Ensi*, and *Entrepreneur*. I’ve been a member of NASW since 2004 and have organized annual meeting workshops and served on the freelance, awards, and programs committees. I would welcome the chance to contribute even more to the future of this organization as a member of the executive board.

## Secretary Candidate

**Deborah Franklin** (NPR)

**I**’m a staff science editor and reporter for NPR, based in San Francisco. Over the years I’ve covered science and medicine



Karl Leif Bates



Mollie Bloudoff-Indelicato



Robert Frederick



Peggy Girshman

up and down both coasts in print, online, and for public radio. I got my start in magazines, first interning at *Science News*, then working as a staff writer and/or editor at *Science News*, *Science '86*, *Hippocrates*, *Health*, and *Fortune* magazines. I've recently worked as a contributing editor (writer) at *Scientific American* and also have contributed regularly to the *New York Times*' personal health column "The Consumer." As a member of the NASW executive board I am excited about finding new ways to strengthen the ties and the sharing of skills and perspective among new and long-time science writers across media. I'm eager to help talented science writers in every region connect to national and international networks and audiences, and to help ensure that any member or regional group with creative energy and a great idea gets the nurturance and support needed to thrive. Don't be afraid to contact any member of the board if you have concerns or would like to get more involved but don't know how. It's not a cabal, it's a community, and we need you. We're all in this together.

### Member-at-Large Candidates

**Karl Leif Bates** (Duke University Research)

There has never been more good science news so universally available, thanks to the explosive evolution of science communication. But when anybody can publish anything and have it seen everywhere, I think NASW and its members have a responsibility to uphold the quality of the science writing craft and to reinforce the importance of trained science writers to the public discourse about science and policy. As a reporter, I lived through the decline of the newspaper science beat from a broadsheet section front to ridiculous weather stories. Transitioning to a university

news office, I adapted from weekly to hourly, from print to digital, from bag full of gear to smartphone in my pocket. This is the kind of adaptation and innovation science writers as a species need to continue, and I'd like to see NASW leading the way. My service to NASW includes chairing the Superstorm Sandy ScienceWriters2012 meeting, in the Research Triangle. I am a recipient of the AAAS-Westinghouse science journalism award (now the Kavli award) for Newspapers (<100,000 daily circulation). I am also a three-time gold award winner in the CASE Circle of Excellence for university relations.

**Mollie Bloudoff-Indelicato** (freelance)

We worked hard to get where we are today, but we didn't make it on our own. We owe some of our success to educators and mentors. Let's give back to the scicomm community. If elected I will develop outreach programs for students and diversify our membership. I've worked for *National Geographic*, *Scientific American*, Reuters and ClimateWire, and I know what it's like to be an editor, reporter, freelancer, and intern. I want to make it easier for new science communicators to jump start their careers. Join me by supporting the following projects: 1) For scicomm newcomers, the prospect of tackling freelance contracts or writing press releases can be daunting. I will hold webinars with NASW members who can take questions/offer advice. 2) I want to work with members to encourage more diversity within our group. Let's think more about ethnicity, geography, specialty, age, and gender when choosing NASW conference speakers. To grow as professionals, we need the fresh ideas that a more diverse membership provides. 3) I will plan a national teaching day, where regional science-writing groups match members with

nearby schools. You'll get to teach students about your career and inspire potential new science communicators in the process.

**Robert Frederick** (freelance)

Science is communicated now more than ever before thanks to the democratization of the Internet, but in keeping with NASW's charter to "foster and promote the professional interests of science writers" (emphasis added), I think we can do more to help our members adapt to the rapidly changing media landscape while earning professional rates. I am seeking a position on NASW's board to work to enhance our member services and professional development programs. A multimedia freelancer with staff experience at *Science* magazine, *American Scientist*, and St. Louis Public Radio, I am keenly aware of the constraints that limit staffers and freelancers alike both in adapting to the rapidly changing media landscape and getting properly paid for it. I contributed the chapter on multimedia freelancing in the NASW-sponsored *The Science Writers' Handbook*, have hosted workshops on multimedia production at regional and national meetings, participated on panels, and mentored student members. I would like to do more. Having served as board member and treasurer of the D.C. Science Writers Association, on NASW's programs committee, and currently serving on NASW's finance and audit committee, I believe I have prepared myself to do more to serve our community. I ask for your vote. Thank you.

**Peggy Girshman** (Kaiser Health News)

I have been a science journalist for more than 30 years, in television, radio, and online and have been proud to be a part of the NASW board in the past two years. *more on page 10*



Jeff Grabmeier



Michael Lemonick



A'ndrea Elyse Messer



Seth Mnookin

## ***Member-at-Large Candidates***

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have been active in the annual workshops for more than six years. In 2012 and 2013, I was a vigorous member of the workshop organizing committee. In 2012, I organized a session “Not Dead Yet: How Science Journalism Is Evolving,” and also was a panel member on a session about the election and health coverage. For several years, fellow board member Beryl Benderly and I have been judges for career grants, selecting folks to receive financial help to help them transition into other aspects of science writing due to the massive shifts in the industry. In addition, I have been active on what is now called the grants committee—considering elaborate and often excellent proposals for grants up to \$10,000 to contribute to the science writing community. Among other projects, we funded a book on freelancing geared to our writers. I am passionate about making sure that science journalists, freelance or staff, continue to have a robust presence in NASW and promise to continue to work hard to fulfill that goal.

**Jeff Grabmeier** (Ohio State University)

**I**n order to survive, NASW will continue to need new members who are full of energy, ideas, and hope for the future of science journalism. That’s the reason why I’ve dedicated my time as an NASW volunteer and board member to working with the education committee. I was co-chair of the committee for eight years, and I am still deeply involved. If re-elected to the NASW board, I plan on continuing to advocate for education-related issues and finding ways to help new science writers develop their careers. Education is part of my professional life, as well: I am currently director of research communications at Ohio State

University, where I have been more than 20 years. Being one of only two PIOs on the board, I have also worked hard to keep the organization focused on the needs of this important segment of the membership. I have felt privileged to help lead this organization since I was first elected to the board in 2010, and I’m eager to continue finding ways to serve the membership.

**Michael Lemonick**

(Climate Central and freelance)

**I**’d like to serve on the NASW board for another term for a couple of reasons. The first is that the issue of harassment, which was something well known to all women in the science-writing community and utterly unknown to most men, has just lately emerged into public conversation. The board has barely begun to wrestle with this, and as a member just emerging from cluelessness, I want to make a contribution from the older-male-member perspective. The second is my increasing understanding that the profession of science writing may not be a reliable way to make a decent living for any of us in the future (I’m obviously not alone here). As someone who had a cushy staff job for many years but who is now struggling with the increasingly bleak landscape of freelancing, I’d like to do whatever I can to apply my (very) long perspective to trying to help new writers establish themselves in the best way possible to avoid an uncertain fate. My teaching and mentorship experiences to date with new writers have given me a fair amount of credibility in that area, and I’d like to bring that to another term on the board.

**A'ndrea Elyse Messer** (Penn State)

**I** am running for NASW’s board because I believe the association needs strong representation from the public informa-

tion membership. I have created NASW workshops and understand the importance of balancing all segments of the association—PIO, freelance, staff. With the support of an Idea Grant and the PIO committee, I organized a regional conference that will hopefully become a model for ongoing professional development for PIOs. I have seen NASW grow and want to help sustain that growth and move the association to the next level. I chair the ad hoc committee tasked with creating an equitable and professional code of ethics for science writers. I am also on the Internet and PIO committees, and have served on the workshop committee. As assistant systems operator, I helped establish the NASW website and two web redesigns. In my professional life, I am the senior science and research information officer in research communications at Penn State, where I write about engineering, physical sciences, earth and mineral sciences, materials science, and anthropology. My background also includes science writer (American Society of Mechanical Engineers), technical writing (Bell Labs), and editing of 11 review journals in chemistry, book translations, and children’s book. I am a Fellow of AAAS.

**Seth Mnookin** (MIT)

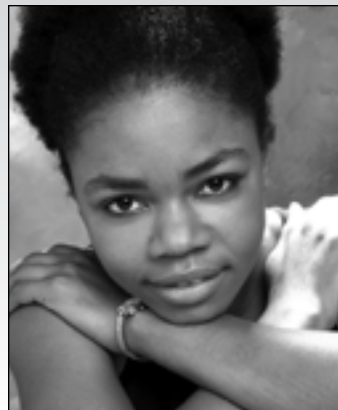
**I** believe I’d be a valuable addition to the NASW board because my background—as a blogger, staff-writer, editor, full-time freelancer, author, and academic—means that regardless of your position, I can probably empathize. The landscape for science writing is evolving so quickly and dramatically that we are constantly forced to address brand-new issues: What are the ethical implications of writing for free? Should a publication’s online work be held to a different standard than its print output—and, for that matter, should a personal



Dave Mosher



Michael E. Newman



Czerne Reid



Hillary Rosner

blog be considered differently from one written as part of a network? As a board member, I'd help NASW tackle these thorny questions by working to develop recommendations we can use to help guide us through these uncharted waters. My most recent book, *The Panic Virus*, won the 2012 NASW Science in Society book award, and I've written about science for everywhere from *Slate* and *Smithsonian* to *The New Yorker* and *Boston Globe*. As the associate director of MIT's Graduate Program in Science Writing, I'm helping to train the next generation of science journalists. I also am one of the organizers of the Solutions Summit 2014: Women in Science Writing, which grew out of a 2013 NASW workshop session.

**Dave Mosher** (*Popular Science*)

**M**y platform is pretty straightforward: Reinvention amid chaos has defined my science-writing career, and it's this enterprising spirit that I'd bring to the NASW board. I'm a science and technology journalist and the online director for *Popular Science*, where I lead the editorial operation that is PopSci.com. Prior to that, I worked for or contributed to outlets such as *Wired*, *Scientific American*, *Popular Mechanics*, *National Geographic News*, *Discovery Channel*, and *Space.com*. My work for these outlets included writing news stories, chasing features, hosting web shows, launching websites, and babysitting astronauts. Then there's my seven active years of involvement as an NASW member. I've repeatedly served as a volunteer in the organization's student mentorship program at AAAS, pitched annual meeting sessions, lurked the email listservs, and recruited countless newcomers. I know our field from a dizzying variety of angles, and I'm equipped to further push NASW into the

future while honoring the core values and standards of our field. I'm counting on your vote to make that happen.

**Michael E. Newman** (NIST)

**A**s a broad-based communicator with an extensive and award-winning 35-year career in four branches of science communication—public affairs, journalism, broadcast media, and freelancing—I feel that I can bring a unique perspective, insight and skill set to the NASW board. I am currently senior communications officer, National Institute of Standards and Technology, as well as a freelance writer/editor. With my diverse background, I can be a voice for the different professional interests within NASW and serve as a unifying force to bridge gaps between them. I became an NASW member in 2009, and within a year created and implemented the Sci-Buddy mentoring program for the ScienceWriters2010 conference. This brought together veteran conference attendees with first-timers to enhance the meeting experience for newbies. I have coordinated the program at each annual conference since and was recognized for this successful effort by being named recipient of the 2013 Diane McGurgan Award. My service to NASW also includes four consecutive years on the programs committee that steers the content of the annual meeting workshops, and active participation within the PIO committee. I am also a member of the NASW code of ethics ad hoc committee.

**Czerne Reid** (University of Florida)

**A**s co-chair of the NASW education committee, I've engaged with many of you this past year through the undergraduate travel fellowship program, mentoring program, and internship fair.

It's clear from your enthusiastic participation and generous volunteer support that you consider NASW's role in nurturing new generations of science writers a top priority. If elected to the board, I will work to find new ways to support young science writers, strengthen our existing efforts, and provide opportunities for experienced members to share their expertise and advice. In addition to my work on the education committee, I've served over the years as a panel organizer, moderator, speaker, and program-committee member for the NASW annual meeting. I work at the University of Florida College of Medicine, where I oversee the development of online education programs for the department of psychiatry. I'm also an adjunct lecturer in the UF College of Journalism and Communications, where I teach science writing. I hold a Ph.D. in environmental chemistry (Emory University) and a graduate certificate in science communication (UC Santa Cruz). I've worked at newspapers and university science news offices, and won awards for my work. I ask for your vote.

**Hillary Rosner** (freelance)

**S**ince my election to the board in 2012, I have sought to make NASW a more forward-looking organization, one that understands and can adapt to meet the needs of today's science writers. I've pushed to add an extra day of the professional development sessions to the annual meeting, and to host the meeting in locations that are accessible to a majority of members. Going forward, I would continue to nudge NASW into the future, and to lobby for programs that help freelancers. I am interested in engaging NASW's younger members to take an active role in steering the organization. It's vital that NASW's board consist

*more on page 12*



Jill Sakai



Brian Switek



Emily Willingham

# Voting Ends August 26

See back cover for in-person and online voting options.

## Member-at-Large Candidates

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of optimistic, proactive people who are enthusiastic about the future of science communication, confident in the face of change, and unwilling to roll over and accept any nonsense about the death of journalism. Anything less is a cop out, and what we do is far too important. I'm a freelance journalist specializing in long-form stories on environmental topics, for publications including *National Geographic*, *Wired*, *New York Times*, *Scientific American*, and *Discover*. In 2015, I will be joining the faculty of the Newhouse School at Syracuse University, to launch a brand-new science and sustainability journalism program.

### **Jill Sakai** (Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison)

I have been an NASW member since 2006, when I had the dubious honor of being the last of three decades' worth of AAAS Mass Media Fellows at the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. After completing a Ph.D. in neuroscience, I changed my aspirations from science PI to PIO and talked my way into a job as a science writer for UW-Madison University Communications. I recently left after seven years to direct communications for the campus Office of Sustainability, where I do a bit of everything—writing, editing, web, social media, strategy development, media relations, intern management, you name it. My NASW service includes running a workshop at the Raleigh meeting, co-executing and reporting on a survey of social media use among PIOs, assisting with the recent compensation survey, and co-organizing the 2012 Science Writing in the Age of Denial conference in Madison. I am also on the program and PIO committees. If elected to the board, I hope to enhance the diversity

of voices within NASW and increase engagement of all segments of the membership. I am skilled at using diplomacy and tact to get things done and will work to increase the value and community of NASW for all members.

### **Brian Switek** (freelance)

Science writer is a polyphyletic term. We've converged on the same occupation from an array of backgrounds, creating a collective of journalists, scientists, students, and amateurs whose interests and expertise are as varied as their pathways to becoming science scribes. My own trajectory was of the informal sort. I started blogging about science to give myself the education I wasn't getting as an undergraduate, and that unremarkable start eventually allowed me to chart my own course to becoming a widely published freelancer, author of the critically praised books *Written in Stone* and *My Beloved Brontosaurus*, blogger for *National Geographic*, and Twitter's de facto dinosaur expert. Given my background, I'm especially sensitive to the concerns of others who came to science writing from outside the halls of journalism. My personal goal for the NASW board is to be a voice for the impassioned amateurs, former researchers, science students, and others who have taken non-traditional routes to this profession. Furthermore, science writers are no longer scribes alone. Writers frequently use audio, video, and photography to tell stories, too, and I hope to expand the role of NASW in preparing writers to make the most of these storytelling tools.

### **Emily Willingham** (freelance)

If elected to the NASW board, I will engage in two critical areas for science communication. One focus will be promoting a diverse membership that ap-

proaches science from historically under-represented perspectives. This aim involves promoting inclusiveness in NASW, across editorial levels, and in narratives and source selection. As an organizer of the Solutions Summit 2014: Women in Science Writing, funded in part by an Idea Grant, I have made clear my commitment to equality and inclusion for science writers. As founder of Double X Science, an online science magazine for women, I have ensured that we feature a diversity of writers on our site. Another aim is broadening the scope of the communications media we emphasize to include more information and training on data visualization and infographic development, in addition to other tools that are becoming increasingly important to success in a digital world. My science writing career spans two decades, with recent work appearing online at *Forbes*, *New York Times*, *Scientific American*, *Discover*, and *Slate*, among others, and selected for inclusion in the Open Lab anthology. I also am co-authoring a science-based parenting book for Penguin's Perigee Books, slated for 2015, and am a university science writing instructor.



## *Election Meeting Scheduled*

In accordance with provisions of the NASW constitution, the election of 2015-16 officers and board members at large will take place during a special membership meeting, announced by first class mail via this issue of *ScienceWriters* and through e-updates. Members have the option of showing up in person from 5:30–7:00 p.m. at The Roosevelt Hotel in New York, N.Y., on Tuesday, August 26, or issuing their voting preferences quickly and easily online in the preceding weeks. (See back cover for more details). ■

# Vote for the Next **NASW BOARD** in Your Choice of Polling Place!

## **Vote In-Person** at a Special Meeting

Elect NASW's board and catch up with fellow members at this end of summer social. Please come socialize even if you choose to vote online. Food and drink will be served.

**Tuesday, August 26**  
**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

The Roosevelt Hotel New York  
45 East 45th Street, Sutton Suite  
New York, NY 10017  
[www.theroosevelthotel.com](http://www.theroosevelthotel.com)

Candidate  
Statements  
are listed  
in this issue of  
*ScienceWriters*.  
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## **Vote Online** with Your Personal Email Invitation

In August, NASW members will receive a personalized email that links to the online voting proxy.

**Online voting ends Tuesday, August 26  
at 3:00 p.m. EST**

*Undecided on a polling place?*  
Issue a proxy online.  
*Change your mind about your vote?*  
An in-person ballot supersedes your proxy. Join us at the special meeting in NYC even if you voted online.

