



Grinell Awarded ASTC's Highest Honor at Annual Conference

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 15, 2005

CONTACT: Sean Smith
202/783-7200 x113
ssmith@astc.org

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Sheila Grinell, former founding President and CEO of the Arizona Science Center in Phoenix, Arizona and current interim CEO of the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose, California, was presented today with the *ASTC Fellow Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Field*, the Association's highest honor. Ms. Grinell accepted the award from Per-Edvin Persson, ASTC president and director of Heureka, the Finnish Science Centre, at the opening breakfast meeting of the 2005 ASTC Annual Conference, the world's largest gathering of science center professionals, hosted by the Science Museum of Virginia in Richmond.

The *ASTC Fellow Award* is bestowed upon individuals who merit special recognition for their significant contributions to the advancement of public understanding and appreciation of science and technology or ASTC itself. It was first presented in 1974, and was most recently awarded in 2003 when Alan Friedman, Director of the New York Hall of Science, and Barbara Mikulski, U.S. Senator from Maryland, were the recipients.

The text of Ms. Grinell's award reads: "The Board of Directors and Members of the Association of Science-Technology Centers hereby award the Fellow Membership for Outstanding Contribution to Sheila Grinell for her role in the pioneering development and growth of the science center field and of ASTC itself. A respected leader, a passionate teacher, and a thoughtful analyst and writer, she has, for more than 30 years, offered inspiration to all who seek to start and sustain places for learning science. We honor her exceptional commitment, advocacy, and vision."

Sheila Grinell was hired in 1969 by Frank Oppenheimer, later an *ASTC Fellow Award* honoree himself, to serve as co-director of exhibits and programs for the newly founded Exploratorium in San Francisco. In 1978, she joined ASTC, ultimately serving as executive director from 1980 to 1982. In 1984, Ms. Grinell and Dr. Friedman undertook an effort to restart the Hall of Science of the City of New York (now the New York Hall of Science). In her long career as a museum consultant, Ms. Grinell wrote a number of articles and books, including *A Place for Learning Science* (ASTC, 1993, revised in 2003)—long considered a blueprint for those seeking to create and sustain new science centers. Her 11 years at the Arizona Science Center began in 1993. There she successfully shepherded the institution through construction and opening and demonstrated a strong commitment to increasing equity and diversity among science center colleagues and visitors.

The Association of Science-Technology Centers is an organization of more than 422 science centers and museums in 42 countries dedicated to furthering the public

-- MORE --

understanding of science among increasingly diverse audiences. ASTC encourages excellence and innovation in informal science learning by serving and linking its members worldwide and advancing their common goals. ASTC provides professional development for the science center field, promotes best practices, supports effective communication, strengthens the position of science centers within the community at large, and fosters the creation of successful partnerships and collaborations. Visit www.astc.org to learn more about ASTC and the *ASTC Fellow Award for Outstanding Contribution*, and to find a science center near you.

#