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03.23.2015

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NCSE recognizes Neil Shubin, Naomi Oreskes, Ronald Numbers, Greg Craven, and the Alliance for Climate Education for their tireless work defending and promoting science education.

Not all stars obsess about mansions, manicures, or money. The celebrities recognized by NCSE's 2015 Friend of Darwin and Friend of the Planet awards confront science denial in every venue, from the silver screen to YouTube to high school auditoriums.



Paleontologist Neil Shubin was already famous for co-discovering *Tiktaalik roseae* (a major fossil that shows the evolutionary transition from fish to amphibians). But with the debut of his PBS series *Your Inner Fish*, he rocketed to fame. Says NCSE's executive director, Ann Reid, "Neil has a special gift for explaining the power and wonder of evolutionary biology in language that everyone can understand."



Historian Naomi Oreskes is yet another glowing star—make that a nova—in the science firmament. As co-author of *Merchants of Doubt*, Oreskes exposed the history of corporate-funded science denial. Said Al Gore: "[This book] demonstrated what many of us have long suspected: that the 'debate' over the climate crisis—and many other environmental issues—was manufactured by the same people who brought you 'safe' cigarettes. Anyone concerned about the state of democracy in America should read this book."

Oreskes's work is finding a new audience, thanks to the release last week of the documentary *Merchants of Doubt* by the director of *Food Inc.* *The Denver Post* dubbed the film "a blood-boiling look at the American spin cycle."



And let's not forget social media stars like Oregon high school physics teacher Greg Craven. In 2007,

armed with only a video camera and a whiteboard, Craven showed millions of YouTube fans *how* to think about and take action on climate change. "The Most Terrifying Video You'll Ever See" has been viewed by nearly 7 million people. His popular 2009 book, *What's the Worst That Could Happen? A Rational Response to the Climate Change Debate*, has been hailed "a brilliant and unique work" and a "tremendous book". Craven continues to fight the good fight for critical thinking, climate change awareness, and good science, both on- and off-line.

Before you do battle with science deniers, you have to understand how they work, what they believe, and why. Ask Ron Numbers, author of *The Creationists*, who has studied (and dissected) the movement for decades. Ann Reid neatly sums up why Professor Numbers has earned his Friend of Darwin award: "It would be hard to think of anyone who has contributed more than Ron Numbers to the understanding of creationism as a historical and social phenomenon".



Finally, a big Friend of the Planet award is bestowed upon the Alliance for Climate Education. ACE doesn't just talk the talk. At high schools all over the nation, ACE holds on-site assemblies about climate change and what kids can do about it. The fast-paced, entertaining, energizing talks combine music, animation, video, and humor to get the essentials across. Then ACE helps schools set up Action Teams that get students involved in local eco-saving projects. Since 2008, ACE has reached 1.8 million students.

MEDIA NOTE: For images of the Friend of Darwin award, the Friend of the Planet Award, and the winners, go to our press image [page](#). [4]

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The National Center for Science Education (NCSE) is a not-for-profit membership organization that defends the teaching of evolution and climate science in the public schools. The NCSE provides information, resources, and advice to schools, teachers, parents, and concerned citizens defending science education. We educate the press and public about the scientific, educational, and legal aspects of these issues at local, state, and national levels. Our 5000 members are scientists, teachers, clergy, and citizens with diverse religious and political affiliations. www.ncse.com

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