



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 6, 2009  
(301) 634-7176

Contact: Ellen R. Weiss  
[eweiss@biophysics.org](mailto:eweiss@biophysics.org)

## Biophysical Society Member Jack W. Szostak Recognized with Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine

**Bethesda, MD** - The Biophysical Society congratulates Jack W. Szostak, Ph.D., on his selection to receive the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine, along with Elizabeth H. Blackburn and Carol W. Greider, "for the discovery of how chromosomes are protected by telomeres and the enzyme telomerase." Szostak joined the Society in 2004 and was a featured speaker at the 2007 Biophysical Society Annual Meeting. Szostak is a HHMI investigator and Professor at Harvard Medical School.

Commenting on the selection of Szostak, Biophysical Society President Henry A. Lester noted that "...Szostak and Blackburn showed that telomeres from the ciliate *Tetrahymena* functioned and replicated appropriately when introduced into yeast, and also that all yeast chromosomes have a common telomere structure. We biophysicists appreciate that such experiments build on the common evolutionary origins of all organisms. Biomedical researchers now suspect that telomerase, the enzyme which builds telomeres, plays a role in aging and in some cancers."

Lester added, "Szostak's original interest in building chromosomes has developed into experiments that connect with other biophysicists in the field of synthetic biology. In these studies, Szostak and his colleagues are constructing model living cells, or 'protocells'. As in Szostak's earlier work, he both explores the possible details of evolution, and also applies these principles to enlighten several scientific fields. Jack Szostak's career illustrates how fundamental biophysical discoveries, at the level of single molecules and parts of living cells, become important tools for biotechnology and medicine."

*The Biophysical Society, founded in 1956, is a professional, scientific society established to encourage development and dissemination of knowledge in biophysics. The Society promotes growth in this expanding field through its annual meeting, monthly journal, and committee and outreach activities. Its members are located throughout the U.S. and the world, where they teach and conduct research in colleges, universities, laboratories, government agencies, and industry.*

9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814-3998 P: (301) 634-7114  
F: (301) 634-7133 E: [society@biophysics.org](mailto:society@biophysics.org) W: [www.biophysics.org](http://www.biophysics.org)

### OFFICERS

#### President

Henry Lester  
*California Institute of Technology*

#### President-Elect

Peter Moore  
*Yale University*

#### Past-President

Harel Weinstein  
*Weill Medical College of Cornell University*

#### Secretary

Dorothy Beckett  
*University of Maryland*

#### Treasurer

Mordecai P. Blaustein  
*University of Maryland School of Medicine*

#### Executive Officer

Rosalba Kampman  
*Biophysical Society, Bethesda*

### COUNCIL

Olaf S. Andersen  
Ivet Bahar  
Michael D. Cahalan  
Patricia Clark  
Marco Colombini  
Valerie Daggert  
David Dawson  
Nynke Dekker  
Enrique De La Cruz  
Sharyn Endow  
Laura Finzi  
Susan P. Gilbert  
Enrico Gratton  
Donald W. Hilgemann  
Vasanthi Jayaraman  
David Millar  
Steven Rosenfeld  
Catherine Royer  
Petra Schwillie  
Frances Separovic  
Toshio Yanagida

### BIOPHYSICAL JOURNAL

#### Editor-in-Chief

Edward Egelman

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

#### Awards

David Clapham

#### Finance

Mordecai P. Blaustein

#### Nominating

Rajini Rao

#### Member Services

Dorothy Beckett

#### Early Careers

Thanin Blumenschein

#### Education

David Dawson

#### International Relations

Catherine Royer

#### Minority Affairs

Ishita Mukerji

#### Professional Opportunities

#### for Women (CPOW)

Rajini Rao

#### Membership

Susan P. Gilbert

#### Publications

David Piston

#### Public Affairs

R. John Solaro and  
Kathleen Hall, Co-Chairs