

March 04, 2015 | By Jade Griffin

## Preeminent Physicist Edward Witten to Speak at UC San Diego March 18

**Presentation, which is part of the Kyoto Prize Symposium, is free and open to the public**

Edward Witten, Ph.D., regarded by many as the world's greatest living physicist, will speak at the University of California, San Diego on March 18 at 3:30 p.m., as part of the annual Kyoto Prize Symposium. To register for the free talk, which is open to the public, please visit: [kyotoprizeusa.org](http://kyotoprizeusa.org).

Witten is the recipient of the 2014 Kyoto Prize—Japan's highest private award for global achievement—in “Basic Sciences.” He received the award in recognition of his contributions to theoretical physics, and more specifically, for his role in the dramatic evolution of superstring theory.

As part of the Kyoto Prize Symposium, which is underwritten by the Inamori Foundation of Japan, Witten will address members of the UC San Diego campus and local community. In addition, UC San Diego will facilitate bringing high school students—many from underserved areas of the region—to campus with the goal of introducing them to the university and the possibility of a career in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields.

“We applaud Dr. Kazuo Inamori and the Inamori Foundation for promoting international understanding and cooperation by honoring and supporting those who contribute greatly to scientific progress, cultural advancement and human betterment,” said Chancellor Pradeep K.



*Edward Witten*

Khosla. “As part of this special symposium, we also are pleased to host students from local high schools at UC San Diego to meet and be inspired by a scientific luminary such as Edward Witten.”

Witten is a professor at the esteemed Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey—a place where Albert Einstein once worked. For more than three decades, Witten has made landmark contributions to theoretical physics, generating research and discoveries which have led the evolution of superstring theory. He has appeared on TIME magazine’s list of the world’s “100 Most Influential People,” as his work is bringing science closer to the long-sought “theory of everything”—one all-encompassing theoretical framework that can offer an integrated perspective of how our universe is constructed.

His research has also had a profound influence on mathematics. He is the only physicist to win the Fields Medal, the world’s top honor for mathematics. Witten has received numerous other awards including the MacArthur “Genius” Grant, the National Medal of Science and the Crafoord Prize. He is also a fellow of the American Mathematical Society.

In April 2015, the World Science Festival will honor Witten’s seminal contributions to the fields of physics and mathematics during their celebration of the 100th anniversary of Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity. The World Science Festival brings together great minds in science and the arts to produce live and digital content that presents the wonders of science and the drama of scientific discovery to a broad general audience. Witten will be the featured speaker at the renowned festival’s “On the Shoulders of Giants” event in New York City.

The UC San Diego presentation is one in the three-part Kyoto Prize Symposium hosted jointly with the University of San Diego, San Diego State University and Point Loma Nazarene University. In addition to Witten, this year’s Kyoto Prize laureates include:

- In “Advanced Technology,” Robert S. Langer, an institute professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) who founded the breakthrough field of tissue engineering, which has become indispensable to the practice of regenerative medicine. He will speak at San Diego State University on March 18 at 10 a.m.
- In “Arts and Philosophy,” Fukumi Shimura, a dyeing and weaving artist whose traditional Japanese *tsumugi* kimonos have led her to be named as a “National Living Treasure” of Japan. Major exhibits of her work have just concluded in Paris and Tokyo. She will present at the University of San Diego on March 19 at 10:30 a.m.

Established by the Inamori Foundation in 1985, the Kyoto Prize strives to honor significant contributions to the scientific, cultural and spiritual betterment of humankind. The president of this nonprofit organization is Kazuo Inamori, founder and chairman emeritus (retired) of Kyocera and KDDI Corporation.

The March 18 talk with Witten will take place in UC San Diego's Price Center West Ballroom from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. The presentation will be followed by a reception with light refreshments, providing an opportunity for students and other attendees to meet Witten. For more information and to register for the free symposium, please visit [kyotoprizeusa.org](http://kyotoprizeusa.org).

---

#### MEDIA CONTACT

**Jade Griffin**, 858-246-5418, [cjgriffin@ucsd.edu](mailto:cjgriffin@ucsd.edu)

UC San Diego's [Studio Ten 300](#) offers radio and television connections for media interviews with our faculty, which can be coordinated via [studio@ucsd.edu](mailto:studio@ucsd.edu). To connect with a UC San Diego faculty expert on relevant issues and trending news stories, visit <https://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/media-resources/faculty-experts>.