AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

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The American Geographical Society Awards 2025 Alexander & Ilse Melamid Medal to Dr. Wendy Jepson

Description: The Alexander & Ilse Melamid Medal, awarded by the American Geographical Society (AGS), is one of several prestigious awards given by the Society. Dr. Wendy Jepson, University Professor in the Department of Geography at Texas A&M University, will receive the prize during the AGS Fall Symposium, held November 20-21, 2025 in New York City, NY.

[New York City, NY] - [October 9, 2025] — The American Geographical Society (AGS) announces Dr. Wendy Jepson, University Professor in the Department of Geography at Texas A&M University, will be the recipient of the 2025 Alexander & Ilse Melamid Medal for outstanding work on the dynamic relationship between human culture and natural resources. This medal will be presented on Friday, November 21, 2025 during the Society's annual Fall Symposium held in New York City, NY.

Established in 2002, the Alexander and Ilse Melamid Medal was named after AGS Councilor Alexander Melamid, who served on the board from 1975 until his death in 2001. Dr. Melamid was the recipient of another AGS medal, the Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal, which he received in 1991. After Dr. Melamid's death, the medal was created in his honor by his wife, Ilse. This medal seeks to award those who examine the influence of humans on the natural world.

Dr. Wendy Jepson is a University Professor in the Department of Geography at Texas A&M University since earning her Ph.D. (UCLA Geography, 2003). She is an internationally recognized scholar known for leading and impactful research on the causes and consequences of water insecurity. Dr. Jepson is a Fellow of the American Association of Geographers (AAG) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), a Fulbright Scholar, and AAAS Leshner Fellow. Jepson leads several research projects and institutional initiatives on water insecurity, supported by grants and awards from the National Science Foundation, private sources, and internal awards. She led the NSF-funded Household Water Insecurity Experiences Research Coordination Network (HWISE-RCN, 2018-2024), an international community of scholars and practitioners dedicated to advance research and work in the interdisciplinary field of water insecurity. She is currently leading a collaboration to develop a water insecurity metric for the United States and advance research on water trust, water affordability, and water capabilities in high-income countries. Her international research portfolio has generated over $9 million in funding, including a $4.6M project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to launch a national center of excellence in humanities-based and community-engaged research on environmental justice at Texas A&M University.

AGS Vice President and Chair of the Honors and Awards Committee, Dr. Deborah Popper, remarked, "As this year's Melamid medalist, Wendy Jepson brings our attention to the critical question of water security. If we understand water as a human right, as we should, then how do we ensure it? Jepson's work has pushed forward our ability to measure water insecurity not just at the regional level, but at the household level, giving us a better shot at initiatives that move us toward our goal."

"We are so very proud to honor these three medal winners. They join a list of some of the most prestigious geographers honored by AGS," said Dr. John Konarski, Chief Executive Officer of AGS.

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The AGS is a 21st-century learning society dedicated to the advancement of geographic thinking, knowledge, and understanding across business, government, academe, social sectors, and most importantly with teachers and students. The vision of AGS is to be the foremost champion of geography for the benefit of society. The mission of AGS is to convene a diverse global community of innovators, thinkers, and practitioners; create and curate geographical knowledge, learning, and exploration; and advance geographic knowledge and technologies to address society's challenges and opportunities. Established in 1851, AGS is the oldest professional geographical organization in the United States and is recognized worldwide as a pioneer in geographical research and education. AGS seeks to engage the American public, from its youngest to its oldest citizens, with new and amazing ways to understand and characterize our changing world. The Society maintains its headquarters in New York City.

Dr. Wendy Jepson

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