
University of Pennsylvania



Institute for Environmental Studies

presents

D. James Baker

President and Chief Executive Officer
The Academy of Natural Sciences

Sustainability: Reinventing the Academy of Natural Sciences

The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia was established in 1812 for the “encouragement and cultivation of the sciences, and the advancement of useful learning.” The Academy’s history mirrors the evolution of the relationship between the American people and the natural world, from the 19th century emphasis on exploration and static exhibits to the 20th century achievements in science and interactive programs. Now as we look to the 21st century future, the primary issue is the Academy response to societal needs for a sustainable interaction with the environment. Academy contributions will be in research and education related to the use of applications of the scientific insights and discoveries that have been made in ecosystem dynamics and global biodiversity.

The Academy is currently engaged in an extensive strategic planning process to lay the groundwork for the future. In this talk, I will focus on the five major goals have been identified: (1) to enhance, focus and integrate research on ecosystem function and biological diversity; (2) to embrace the information age by developing a strong program in bioinformatics to make the Academy’s collections available online; (3) to inform environmental policy by translating and explaining environmental science and the many indicators of sustainable development; (4) to engage a broad spectrum of the public with environmental education from watersheds to live animals; and (5) to re-invent the natural history museum with a focus on human interaction with the environment, using new exhibits based on research and collections and new interactive computer technology, and providing a town meeting forum for discussion of multi-sector environmental issues. Finally, all of this will be done in the long-term context of the goal of celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Academy with a transformed institution. I will give some specific examples of what we hope to achieve, and will discuss new partnerships that will help us meet our goals.

Date: Thursday, January 23, 2003

Time: **NOON - 1:30 pm**

Place: **Auditorium at Wistar Institute**

On Penn’s campus: Spruce Street & Penn’s 36th Street Walkway
No Food or Drink Permitted in the Auditorium

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED

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