DOCUMENTING THE HISTORY OF INVENTION AND INNOVATION THROUGH THE WORK OF INVENTORS

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LEMELSON CENTER
SMITHSONIAN
LEMELSON CENTER MISSION

To engage, educate, and empower the public to participate in technological, economic, and social change.

We undertake historical research, develop educational initiatives, create exhibitions, and host public programming that advance new perspectives on invention and innovation and foster interactions between the public and inventors.
COLLECTING & RESEARCH

Collecting priorities:

- American independent inventors
- Underrepresented inventors (women, immigrants, ethnic and racial minorities; disabled)
COLLECTING & RESEARCH

Example:

- N. Joseph Woodland, who, along with Bernard Silver, invented and developed the bar code
COLLECTING & RESEARCH

Research priorities:

• Enhance access and use of collections
• Promote broad dissemination of research products
COLLECTING & RESEARCH

Example:

- Tania Candiani, artist
ACCESS & EDUCATION

Priorities:

- Tell inspiring, diverse, and surprising stories; dispel myths; and encourage visitors to participate and see themselves as inventive.
- Exhibit relevant archival materials and objects drawn from Lemelson Center research
- Share first-person stories of diverse inventors
ACCESS & EDUCATION

Exhibit relevant archival materials and objects drawn from Lemelson Center research

Public programs:

• Objects Out of Storage
ACCESS & EDUCATION

Exhibit relevant archival materials and objects drawn from Lemelson Center research

Exhibitions

• Inventive Minds
ACCESS & EDUCATION

Share first-person stories of diverse inventors

Digital outreach

• Inventing Green videos
  • Amy Prieto is an associate professor of chemistry at Colorado State University and the founder of Prieto Battery. Prieto is developing a rechargeable battery that will last longer, charge faster, and be free of toxic materials.
THANK YOU!

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