Alumni

Kelly Link '91SOA, Adrian Krainer ’81CC, and Other Alumni in the News

Winter 2018-19



Kelly Link

Writer Kelly Link ’91SOA won a 2018 MacArthur Fellowship — also called a “genius grant.” Link is known for her genre-bending short stories, which blend elements of science fiction and fantasy with realistic depictions of modern life. Link also runs Small Beer Press, which publishes new voices in fantasy and literary fiction.

Biochemist Adrian Krainer ’81CC and Columbia pharmacology professor C. Frank Bennett won this year’s Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences. Often called “the Oscars of science,” the $3 million awards are the world’s most lucrative scientific prizes.

Krainer and Bennett were recognized for their work using RNA splicing to develop new drugs to treat spinal muscular atrophy, a devastating genetic disease found in children.

Sigrid Nunez ’75SOA won the National Book Award for her novel *The Friend*. Two other Columbians were finalists: Diana Khoi Nguyen ’12SOA, for her poetry collection *Ghost Of*, and Sarah Smarsh ’05SOA, for her memoir *Heartland*. Additionally, the National Book Foundation included novelist Hannah Lillith Assadi ’08CC, ’13SOA on its annual “5 Under 35” list.



Elissa Slotkin

Elissa Slotkin ’03SIPA was elected to the United States House of Representatives, unseating a Republican incumbent in Michigan. During the Obama administration, Slotkin worked as an analyst for the CIA and as an assistant secretary of defense.

Leyla Martinez ’18GS was selected for a Soros Justice Fellowship and will use her stipend to continue her work as an advocate for criminal-justice reform. Martinez, a formerly incarcerated mother, founded an organization that supports students affected by incarceration.

The **Alliance for Justice** honored attorney Roberta Kaplan ’91LAW at its annual gala. Kaplan is best known for representing Edith Windsor in the case that toppled the Defense of Marriage Act, and she is also a cofounder of the Time’s Up Legal Defense Fund, which provides legal support to women in sexual-harassment cases.



Guide to school abbreviations

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