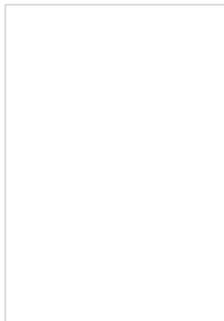


## Mincer Award Winners 2005:



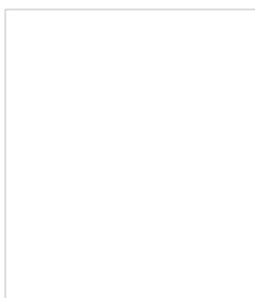
**Orley Ashenfelter** is one of the two winners of the 2005 Society of Labor Economists' Jacob Mincer prize honoring lifetime achievements in the field of labor economics. Over the course of a distinguished career, Orley Ashenfelter has had tremendous influence on the development of modern labor economics. His early work on trade unions brought neoclassical economics to bear on a subject that had been the domain of traditional institutionally-oriented industrial relations specialists. As labor supply emerged as one of the most important subjects in the new field, Ashenfelter showed (in work with James Heckman) that neoclassical theory could be applied to decision making within the family. In his Frisch-prize winning 1980 article, Ashenfelter developed a theoretical and empirical framework for distinguishing between voluntary and involuntary unemployment. Orley was also involved in the income maintenance experiments, the first large-scale social experiments.

In 1972 Orley served as Director of the Office of Evaluation of the U.S. Dept. of Labor and became deeply interested in the problem of program evaluation. This focus led him to emphasize developing credible and transparent sources of identification through strategies such as the collection of new data, difference-in-difference designs, and exploiting "natural experiments."

In the 1990s, Orley turned to measuring the returns to education. In a series of studies using new data on twins, Ashenfelter (with Alan Krueger and Cecilia Rouse) suggested that OLS estimates of the returns to schooling were biased downward to a significant degree. Orley has also had a significant impact on the development of empirical law and economics in recent years.

Beyond his personal contributions, Orley has had a significant impact as a mentor. His students are legion and include many of the leading economists of the next generation.

Orley served the profession as editor of the American Economic Review Review from 1985 to 2001, and as an editor of the Handbook of Labor Economics. He is currently the 1895 Joseph Douglas Green Professor of Economics at Princeton University, and the Editor and co-founder of the American Journal of Law & Economics. He has been honored with a Guggenheim fellowship and with the IZA Prize in Labor Economics and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Econometric Society.



**James Heckman** is one of the winners of the 2005 Society of Labor Economists' Jacob Mincer prize for lifetime achievement in the field of Labor Economics. Heckman was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2000, together with Daniel McFadden. The Nobel committee cited Heckman's pathbreaking work on the selection problem, which is arguably the most important impediment to causal inference in social science. Heckman's analysis of selection problems in microeconomic research has had profound implications for applied research in economics.

Heckman's work on selection, and on the creation of plausible policy counterfactions, has had a profound impact on labor economics and on microeconomics more generally. He has applied these tools to understanding the economics progress of African-Americans, lifecycle labor supply, the evaluation of training programs, lifecycle human capital accumulation, the regulation of labor markets, and income inequality, among other topics. His work on program evaluation is extremely influential. He is a prolific author with over 200 published papers and many books.

Some of his recent books include: *Inequality in America: What Role for Human Capital Policy?* (with Alan Krueger), 2003; *Evaluating Human Capital Policy* (the Gorman Lectures), 2004; and *Law and Employment: Lessons from Latin American and the Caribbean* (with C. Pages), 2003. It is especially appropriate for Heckman to win the Mincer prize since he began his academic career at Columbia and credits Jacob Mincer and Finis Welch with being the "guiding lights of a brilliant empirical environment."

James Heckman is currently the Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago, the Director

of the Economics Research Center and of the Center for Social Program Evaluation at the University of Chicago, and a Senior Research Fellow at the American Bar Foundation. He is also a Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Statistical Association, and the Econometric Society. He has received many honors including the American Economic Association's John Bates Clark medal in 1983.

2005 Nominating Committee:

John Bound  
Janet Currie, chair  
Hank Farber  
Audrey Light  
Steve Rivkin  
Finis Welch  
Bob Willis