

NOVA: POISONED WATER

**Premieres Wednesday, May 31, 2017 at 9PM/8C on PBS
(check local listings)**

WINTER 2017 TCA PRESS TOUR PANELIST BIOS

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PAULA S. APSELL

**Senior Executive Producer, NOVA, and
Director, WGBH Science Unit, WGBH Boston**

Paula Apsell began her work in broadcast typing the public broadcaster WGBH Boston's daily logs, a job, she notes, that is now mercifully automated. While at WGBH-FM, her next move, she developed the award-winning children's drama series *The Spider's Web* and served as an on-air radio news producer. She then joined WGBH's pioneering science documentary series NOVA, producing, among several other programs, *Death of a Disease*, the first long-form documentary about the worldwide eradication of smallpox. Moving to WCVB, the ABC affiliate in Boston, she became senior producer for medical programming, working with Dr. Timothy Johnson. She then spent a year at MIT as a Knight Science Journalism Fellow until she took over the leadership of NOVA, where she is now senior executive producer and director of the WGBH Science Unit. She is a recipient of the Bradford Washburn Award from the Museum of Science, Boston; the Carl Sagan Award, given by the Council of Scientific Society Presidents; the American Institute of Physics Andrew Gemant Award; and the Planetary Society's Cosmos Award, among many others. She has served on the board of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, the Brandeis University Sciences Advisory Committee and the International Documentary Association.

MARC EDWARDS

Charles Lunsford Professor of Civil Engineering

Marc Edwards is the Charles Lunsford Professor of Civil Engineering at Virginia Tech, where he teaches courses in environmental engineering, applied aquatic chemistry and engineering ethics. His research group aspires to pursue science as a public good, through laboratory work on practically important but underfunded topics such as corrosion in buildings and opportunistic premise-plumbing pathogens—that work laid the groundwork for investigative science uncovering the 2001-2004 D.C. Lead Crisis and the 2014-2016 Flint Water Disaster. *Time* Magazine dubbed Edwards "The Plumbing Professor" in 2004, and listed him amongst the 4 most important "Innovators" in water from around the world. The White House awarded him a Presidential Faculty Fellowship in 1996. His paper on lead poisoning of children in Washington D.C., due to elevated lead in drinking water, was judged the outstanding science paper in Environmental Science and Technology in 2010. In 2013 Edwards' was the 9th recipient (in a quarter century) of the IEEE Barus Award for "***courageously defending the public interest at great personal risk***," and in 2016 he was named amongst the most influential people in the world by Time, Fortune, Politico and Foreign Policy magazine.

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VEO LUSTER

Flint Resident, Principal, Luster's Contracting

Veol Luster is a Flint resident and has spent his career working on water distribution infrastructure. He never expected to find himself in the center of the disastrous water crisis, but now he is experiencing the devastation first hand, as his grandchildren were poisoned by the contaminated water. Veol is now working with crews to help find and replace Flint's corroded pipes.

DR. SIDDHARTHA ROY

Environmental Engineer and PhD Candidate, Virginia Tech

Siddhartha Roy is completing his PhD in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Virginia Tech. He works with Dr. Marc Edwards researching corrosion in potable water infrastructure, specifically in copper and nonlead plumbing. Sid also serves as the student leader and communications director for the Virginia Tech "Flint Water Study" research team that utilized citizen science, field sampling, lab experiments, investigative journalism and social media to help uncover the Flint Water Crisis. The team's efforts led to declaration of a national "Public Health Emergency" by President Barack Obama, garnered over \$600 million in relief for Flint residents, and informed a long overdue debate on "safe" water in America. Sid launched the research/public health website www.flintwaterstudy.org and his mini-documentary on his team's role in the Flint Crisis won 2nd prize in a national video competition for environmental engineers. He was a TEDxVirginiaTech 2016 speaker on "The Public Focused Scientist/Engineer" and previously served as the Head Grant Writer and Researcher for an Engineers Without Borders WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) project involving implementation of a wastewater system for a boarding school in Xix, Guatemala. Sid's undergraduate advisees have won institute (Virginia Tech) and state-level awards for their research work. Sid holds degrees in Environmental Engineering and Chemical Engineering from Virginia Tech and Nirma University respectively.

LLEWELLYN "LLEW" SMITH

Producer and Director

For thirty years, the documentaries of Peabody and du Pont award-winner Llewellyn Smith have explored a range of social justice topics, including race relations and racial identity, American slavery, Reconstruction, health inequities, civil rights, community organizing and childhood trauma in impoverished neighborhoods.

Llew was an executive producer for the PBS series ***Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*** (2008)—a look at how social and economic conditions determine health and longevity. He directed the film ***Herskovits At The Heart Of Blackness*** (2010), examining the consequences of race identity politics. In 2012 Llew directed and produced ***Gaining Ground: Building Community on Dudley Street***. The film follows community organizing and community building efforts over a two-year period in the Boston neighborhood where he grew up.

For the PBS series NOVA Llew served as director/ producer ***Forgotten Genius*** (2007), a biopic on the science of pioneering African American chemist and civil rights activist Percy Julian. The Emmy-nominated film received the American Association for the Advancement of Science Award (AAAS), the National Science Writers Award and the National Academies of Sciences Communications Award.

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Llew was Series Editor for the PBS's ***American Experience*** from 1987-1995 and was an associate producer for the groundbreaking series *Eyes On The Prize: America's Civil Rights Years*. Other credits include ***Africans In America: America's Journey Through Slavery*** (1997), ***Jubilee Singers: Sacrifice and Glory*** (1999), ***Race: The Power Of An Illusion*** (2003), and ***Wounded Places: Confronting Childhood PTSD in America's Shell-Shocked Cities*** (2015). He directed the Emmy-nominated *American Denial* (ITVS, 2015), a look at the historical impact of unconscious bias in American life.

Last year he was commissioned by Moët-Hennessy to produce and direct *An Unexpected History*, to honor the company's 250 anniversary.

Llew is a contributor to WNET's upcoming 2-hour special *The Talk* (2017), a look at volatile of race with American policing.

Other filmmaking honors include The George Foster Peabody Award, The Council On Foundation's Henry Hampton Award, the Alfred I. du Pont Columbia Award, The John O'Connor Film Award of the American Historical Association, The Eric Barnouw Award, The Hollywood Black Film Festival Best Documentary Award, multiple Writer's Guild nominations and other honors.

LEANNEE WALTERS

Flint Resident, Mother, Water Activist, Citizen Scientist

LeeAnne Walters is a Flint resident turned water activist and citizen scientist who helped expose the lead contamination of Flint's drinking water supply by leading citywide water sampling and protest efforts as well as bringing in U.S. EPA and Virginia Tech experts to provide scientific evidence. In February 2016, she testified in front of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the U.S. House of Representatives on the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), State of Michigan and the federal U.S. EPA's role in creating and prolonging the Flint Water Crisis. She is also the recipient of the 2016 PEN/Toni and James C. Goodale Freedom of Expression Courage Award, the 2016 Health Policy Heroes Award and the Champion of Children Award. She is a dual citizen of Flint, MI and Norfolk, VA where she lives with her husband and four children.

ADDITIONAL ONSITE TALENT:

JULIA CORT

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, NOVA

Julia Cort has more than 25 years of broadcast experience as a producer, writer and director. Since joining the WGBH Science Unit in 1991, she has contributed to more than 80 films, including *Making North America*, *The Fabric of the Cosmos*, *Smartest Machine on Earth* and *Chasing Pluto*. In the pursuit of a story, Cort has traveled deep underground to investigate the hunt for dark matter, been blindfolded and led to secret diamond-making factories, waded into leech-infested swamps, and attempted to re-create the technological feats of ancient Egyptian engineers. She is a recipient of the George Foster Peabody Award, the National Academies Keck Communication Award, the AAAS Science Journalism Award, the American Institute of Physics Science Writing Award, the National Association of Science Writers Science in Society Award and the News & Documentary Emmy.

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