

## Opening Session

### **The Day the Mesozoic Died (a film presentation)**

**Sean B. Carroll, Howard Hughes Medical Institute and University of Wisconsin**

How can we help students to appreciate and understand the history of life—and what we know and how we know it? Film is one potentially powerful medium for bringing the excitement of scientific discovery into the classroom, and for illustrating the scientific process. HHMI has launched a science filmmaking unit to produce films for science classrooms, as well as for broadcast and giant screens. This film tells the story of the extraordinary detective work that led to the stunning discovery that an asteroid struck the Earth 66 million years ago, triggering a mass extinction of animals, plants, and other species. Shot on location in Italy, Spain, Texas, Colorado, and North Dakota, and produced by Emmy-winning filmmaker Sarah Holt, the film traces the uncovering of key clues that unraveled the K-T extinction. A rare and extraordinary instance in which many different disciplines—geology, physics, biology, chemistry, paleontology—contributed to a revolutionary theory, the film is intended for students in *all* science classes.