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Nobel Prize in chemistry goes to 2 Americans, 1 German

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The three scientists were cited for "the development of super-resolved fluorescence microscopy," which the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said had bypassed the maximum resolution of traditional optical microscopes.

"Their groundbreaking work has brought optical microscopy into the nanodimension," the academy said.



'Deutscher Zukunftspreis' in Munich, Germany, shares the 2014 Nobel Prize for Chemistry with Americans Eric Betzig and William Moerner. (Joerg Koch / AP)

Betzig, 54, works at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Ashburn, Va. Hell, 51, is director at the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry in Goettingen, Germany. Moerner, 61, is a professor at Stanford University.

Last year's chemistry prize went to three U.S.-based scientists who developed powerful computer models that researchers use to understand complex chemical interactions and create new drugs.

This year's Nobel announcements started Monday with U.S.-British scientist John O'Keefe splitting the medicine award with Norwegian couple May-Britt Moser and Edvard Moser for breakthroughs in brain cell research that could pave the way for a better understanding of ailment such as Alzheimer's disease.

On Tuesday, Isamu Akasaki and Hiroshi Amano of Japan and Japanese-born U.S. scientist Shuji Nakamura won the physics award for the invention of blue light-emitting diodes -- a breakthrough that spurred the development of LED technology that can be used to light up homes and offices and the screens of mobile phones, computers and TVs.

The Nobel Prize in literature is to be announced Thursday, followed by the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday and the economics prize on Monday.

The prizes are always handed out in ceremonies on Dec. 10, the date that prize founder Alfred Nobel died in 1896. A wealthy Swedish industrialist who invented dynamite, Nobel wanted his awards to honor those who "have conferred the greatest benefit to mankind," but gave only vague instructions on how to select winners.

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