

Benefit to the Society

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Whenever I meet somebody new outside science, I always dread of two questions. First one: “You study physics? I hated it back in high school! How would anybody want to devote oneself to it?” I think I can handle this question by explaining physics is a very human activity with lots of drama of rivalry, working together, excitement, and luck. Then comes the second question that is harder to answer: “And you spend millions of dollars? What is your study good for?”

The short answer is none. Human beings have been wondering about the mysteries of the Universe for millennia, not because it makes us wealthier or healthier, but for pure intellectual curiosity. But such a quest does have a place in our society. It will give us new perspective about our place in the Nature, with subtle connections to philosophy. We will be intellectually richer, and may understand ourselves better.

But sometimes it will bring us something more tangible. Worldwide web was invented for researchers to exchange data; it is now a multi-trillion-dollar business. Many technologies invented for basic research have applications in our daily life; laser for DVDs, superconducting magnets in MRI, and particle accelerators for radiation therapy. We expect cutting-edge research will produce similar applications as by-products.

In addition, we are committed to bring back our

findings to people who supported them. Public lectures we've organized have proved extremely popular, and were sold out each time. We mobilized more than twelve hundred people so far, which shows people do care about intellectual richness beyond practical applications. This newsletter is another such effort; I hope you enjoy it! We will organize schools for high school students. We very much hope that our research and outreach effort will excite young minds to study science, mathematics, and engineering. We aspire to become a magnet to science for the society at large.

