



BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE EMINENT SCHOLAR AWARD

Aggie Women Network and Texas A&M University

Purpose of the Award

The Eminent Scholar Award is designed to recognize outstanding research, scholarship, mentoring, and service among faculty at Texas A&M University. The Award honors the role these extraordinary faculty play in serving as models for all women students at the University. The Award is bestowed annually on faculty from a wide range of disciplines and gives witness to the extraordinary contributions that faculty make as Texas A&M University seeks to assume a place of preeminence among public universities around the world.

History of the Award

- In 2009, then-Aggie Women President Carol Jordan '80 proposed creation of a mechanism to recognize the accomplishments of Texas A&M University faculty who impact the success of women students.
- That year Jordan and other Aggie Women board members held a focus group with A&M women faculty to seek input on how a specialized recognition could have maximum influence on the advancement of their careers, particularly in the areas of recruitment and retention.
- In 2010, Aggie Women proposed to then-President Bowen Loftin establishment of the Eminent Scholar Award as a joint project of Aggie Women and Texas A&M University.
- The Award is accompanied by a monetary award of \$4,000 (half of which is funded by Aggie Women and half by the University).
- Recipients of the award are included below.
- Faculty Affairs is the point of contact for the ESA as they manage processes for all faculty awards at the University.

Eligibility for the Award

- Faculty of any gender who are tenured full professors and have been on the faculty at any Texas A&M University for at least 2 years.
- Prior recipients of highly prestigious national and international recognitions (including but not limited to Wolf Prize, Nobel Prize, ACLS Fellowships, Guggenheim Fellowships, NEH Fellowships, or membership in the National Academies of Sciences, Medicine, or Engineering).
- Exemplary role models for women's success, as demonstrated by a long-standing commitment to women at Texas A&M and a record of excellence in teaching, service, mentoring, and exceptional achievements that have impacted current women students of Texas A&M. Record must clearly show an active role towards helping Aggie Women and contributing to their success.

Prior Recipients of the Eminent Scholar Award

2023 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient



Dr. Sherry Yennello holds the Bright Chair in Nuclear Science and is a University Distinguished Professor and Regents Professor of Chemistry at Texas A&M University. She also serves as the Director of the Cyclotron Institute and the Nuclear Solutions Institute. Her academic training included undergraduate study at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (B.S., Chemistry 1985 & B.S., Physics 1986) and graduate study under the direction of Dr. Victor Viola (Ph.D., Chemistry 1990). She began her academic career as an Assistant Professor at Texas A&M in 1993, was promoted to Full Professor in 2000 and named a University Distinguished Professor in 2023. Dr. Yennello's research interests include accelerator based heavy-ion reactions to study the dynamics and thermodynamics of excited nuclear matter and elucidate the nuclear equation of state – particularly the density dependence of the symmetry term – which has implications for the formation of elements and other astrophysical processes. Additionally, her research impacts society through accelerator produced isotopes for medical applications – particularly the production, purification, and application of alpha-emitting isotopes for targeted alpha therapy. Equity and access to education and professional advancement for all, including both creating opportunities and motivating students to take advantage of opportunities that are available is another focus of her scholarly activity. She is particularly interested in motivating the current stakeholders to be agents of change.

Her recent awards include the Southern Universities Research Association Distinguished Scientist Award, the American Chemical Society's Glenn T. Seaborg Award in Nuclear Chemistry, and the American Chemical Society's Francis P. Garvan - John M. Olin Medal "for local and national leadership roles to create programs that address and remove the causes that have traditionally impeded the progress of women scientists." Dr. Yennello is a Fellow of the American Chemical Society, the American Physical Society, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She has secured federal funding for fundamental research, advancing women in science and educational opportunities for students. Most notably, she was the PI for the National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE program "to increase the representation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers", and is currently the PI for a Texas A&M based Department of Energy (DOE) Center of Excellence and the PI for a multi-institution DOE/National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Center of Excellence.

2022 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient



Dr. Shippen earned her doctorate in biology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She completed postdoctoral fellowships at the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of California, San Francisco. Dr. Shippen pioneered the use of the flowering plant *Arabidopsis thaliana* as a model for understanding the structure and function of telomeres, and the telomerase enzyme. Her research has been continuously funded by grants from the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation with additional support from private and state funding agencies. Dr. Shippen currently serves as a Co-PI on the NIH T32 training grant, "TMSD at Texas A&M University: Initiative for maximizing student diversity in biomedical sciences". Dr. Shippen has presented more than 125 invited lectures on her telomere research and has published 93 peer-reviewed research articles, reviews, commentaries and book chapters (h-index =43; i10-index = 75). In addition to numerous awards for her research, Dr. Shippen received the Texas A&M Association of Former Students' Distinguished Achievement Award for Graduate Mentoring and the Rose Award from the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology for outstanding contributions to biochemical and molecular biological research and commitment to training younger scientists.

Dr. Shippen participated as an Instructor for the Burroughs Wellcome Fund/Howard Hughes Medical Institute Laboratory Management Course, and conducted NSF-funded research on best practices in laboratory management. She teaches a graduate course on scientific leadership and has conducted numerous workshops at Texas A&M and at other venues on this topic. In her laboratory, Dr. Shippen has mentored more than 110 undergraduate students, hosted 10 international visiting scientists, guided three graduate students to MS degrees and 22 graduate students to Ph.D. degrees, and trained 19 postdoctoral fellows who are now in academic, industry or teaching institutions. Dr. Shippen was named a Texas A&M Advance Diversity Champion and recently served on the Texas A&M President's Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. She is currently a member of the University of Distinguished Professors Executive Committee and the Advisory Board for the Hagler Institute for Advanced Study.

2021 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient

Dr. Valerie M. Hudson is a University Distinguished Professor and holds the George H.W. Bush Chair in the



Department of International Affairs at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M, where she directs the Program on Women, Peace, and Security. She has previously taught at Brigham Young, Northwestern, and Rutgers universities. Her research foci include foreign policy analysis, security studies, gender and international relations, and methodology. In addition to an extensive publication record in preeminent journals, Dr. Hudson is the author or editor of several books, including (with Andrea Den Boer) *Bare Branches: The Security Implications of Asia's Surplus Male Population* (MIT Press, 2004), which won the American Association of Publishers Award for the Best Book in Political Science, and the Otis Dudley Duncan Award for Best Book in Social Demography, resulting in feature stories in the New York Times, The Economist, 60 Minutes, and other news publications. Dr. Hudson's book *Sex and World Peace*, co-authored with Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Mary Caprioli and Chad Emmett, and published by Columbia University Press, was listed by Gloria Steinem in 2014 as one of the top three books on her "Reading Our Way to the Revolution" list. Emma Watson chose *Sex and World Peace* as the inaugural reading for her book club and interviewed Hudson for Teen Vogue about it in 2020. Her latest coauthored book, with Donna Lee Bowen and Perpetua Lynne Nielsen, is *The First Political Order: How Sex Shapes Governance and National Security Worldwide*, was published in 2020 with Columbia University Press, and has already been nominated for several awards.

Dr. Hudson has won numerous research and teaching awards, including an inaugural Andrew Carnegie Fellowship as well as an inaugural Fulbright Distinguished Chair in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at Australian National University (2017). She has been selected as the Distinguished Scholar Award recipient for 2022 by the Political Demography and Geography Section (PDG/ISA) of the International Studies Association. Most notably, Dr. Hudson is a co-founder and Principal Investigator of The WomanStats Project (<http://womanstats.org>), which includes the largest compilation of data on the status of women in the world today, and is used by scholars, policymakers, students, and advocates alike. Through The WomanStats Project, Dr. Hudson has closely mentored over 150 students as research assistants, with many now having careers in government, academia, and business. She has helped develop a Gender-Lens Curriculum for the teaching of International Development, funded by the USDA.

Dr. Hudson is the president of a 501(c)3 organization producing peer-reviewed research on Cystic Fibrosis; she served in the 11th Special Forces U.S. Army Reserve as a wheeled vehicle and power generator mechanic, is a cofounder of the LDS National Security Society, and has been a La Leche League Leader for over 33 years.

2021 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient

Dr. Karen L. Wooley holds the W. T. Doherty-Welch Chair in Chemistry and is a University Distinguished Professor



and Presidential Impact Fellow at Texas A&M, with appointments in the Departments of Chemistry, Chemical Engineering and Materials Science & Engineering. She also serves as Director of the Laboratory for Synthetic-Biologic Interactions. Dr. Wooley previously taught at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, where she was a James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor in Arts & Sciences. Her research interests include the synthesis and characterization of degradable polymers derived from natural products, unique macromolecular architectures and complex polymer assemblies, and the design and development of well-defined nanostructured materials. Dr. Wooley has designed synthetic strategies to harness the rich compositional, regiochemical and stereochemical complexity of natural products for the construction of hydrolytically-degradable polymers, which have impact toward sustainability, reduction of reliance on petrochemicals, and production of biologically-beneficial and environmentally-benign natural products upon degradation - these materials are expected to impact the global issue of plastic pollution and address challenges resulting from climate change. The

development of novel synthetic strategies, fundamental study of physicochemical and mechanical properties, and investigation of the functional performance of her materials in the diagnosis and treatment of disease, as superabsorbent hydrogels to address global challenges associated with excessive liquid water, as non-toxic anti-biofouling or anti-icing coatings, as materials for microelectronics device applications, and as environmental remediation systems are particular foci of her research activities.

Dr. Wooley is the recipient of many awards, including the American Chemical Society Award in Polymer Chemistry (2014), the Royal Society of Chemistry Centenary Prize (2014), and election as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2015), the National Academy of Inventors (2019), the American Association for the Advancement of

Science (2020), the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (2020), and the National Academy of Sciences (2020). She was recently selected as a recipient of a 2021 Southeastern Conference (SEC) Faculty Achievement Award and was named as the 2021 SEC Professor of the Year. Dr. Wooley has served on the technical advisory boards and served in consulting capacities for several companies, from Fortune 500 companies to start-ups, and law firms. She is the co-founder and President of Sugar Plastics, LLC, and Chief Technology Officer of Teysha Technologies, LTD. Karen currently serves as both an executive editor and an associate editor for the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, among many other advisory roles within the broader scientific community.

Dr. Wooley has a long-standing commitment to diversity, formally and informally, having served on numerous committees that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, while also being dedicated to diversity promoting practices throughout her research, teaching, and service. She has mentored and nominated several female Texas A&M students, faculty, and staff for awards. Dr. Wooley also promotes the career development of female scientists nationally and internationally. For instance, she currently serves as an Executive Editor for the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, for which she leads a team of three female and one male associate editors who are located in the U.S., Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

2020 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient

Dr. Jyotsna Vaid is Professor of Cognition and Cognitive Neuroscience and Women's and Gender Studies and Director of the Language and Cognition Laboratory at Texas A&M. Born in New Delhi, India, and raised in upstate New York, Vaid received her undergraduate degree at Vassar College, her doctorate at McGill University, and a post-doctoral fellowship at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies. She joined Texas A&M University as an assistant professor and went on, in 2001, to become the second woman (and the first woman of color) to attain the rank of full professor in psychology at the university. Known for her pioneering and widely cited research on the neuropsychology of



bilingualism, Vaid has also contributed seminal studies on reading and writing, numerical thinking, spatial cognition, and humor processing in users of different languages. Spearheading new directions in research in language and cognition, Vaid was a founding editor of *Writing Systems Research* and is currently Associate Editor of the *Journal of Cultural Cognitive Science*. She was also Founding Editor for over 10 years of a grassroots feminist publication, the Committee on South Asian Women *Bulletin*. Through her past administrative service at Texas A&M (on the Women's Faculty Network, the International Faculty Network, and the ADVANCE Scholar program, and as Acting Director of Women's and Gender Studies, Interim Director of International Studies, and Director of Organizational Development, Research and Equity at the Office for Diversity), Vaid has been a champion for women faculty, particularly faculty of color.

The author of three edited books and monographs, 86 scholarly articles, 40 book chapters, and three guest edited journal issues, Vaid's research spans psychology, linguistics, cognitive neuroscience, education, and gender studies. She has received numerous honors, including the 2020 Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Brain, Language, and Music at McGill University's Faculty of Medicine. She is an elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Association for Psychological Science, the Psychonomics Society, and the American Psychological Association's Society for the Psychology of Women and Society for Experimental and Cognitive Science. In her field and in the university Vaid has successfully mentored many women students who now hold faculty positions across the U.S. and elsewhere. She received a senior mentorship award from Women in Cognitive Science, and several awards from Texas A&M in recognition of her mentorship and leadership in diversity efforts. Her experiences as an advocate led her to collaborate on a series of publications on gender and race in higher education. Within her department, Vaid co-founded, in 2012, the Diversity Science Research Cluster, to create an academic community for scholars who center diversity in their research. In pre-pandemic times, Vaid regularly presented her research at conferences across the world and hopes to do so again.

2019 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient

Dr. Hipwell has been working in the area of technology development based upon nanoscale phenomena for over 20



years. She received her B.S.M.E. from Rice University and her M.S. and Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley. Upon graduation, she went to work at Seagate Technology's Recording Head Division in Bloomington, Minnesota. During her time at Seagate, Dr. Hipwell held various individual and leadership positions in the areas of reliability, product development, and advanced mechanical and electrical technology development. In these various roles, she has been at the forefront of the creation of new devices, models, and metrology from fundamental understanding of nanoscale phenomena and nanotechnology integration, driving an industry-leading head disk interface technology portfolio and leading the head feasibility demonstration of the radically new recording technology, Heat Assisted Magnetic Recording (HAMR). Dr. Hipwell is known as both a technology and business process innovator, increasing the pace of technology development in her teams through improvements in innovation business processes and, as a leader, creating an environment that encourages and rewards innovation, ownership, teamwork, and

excellence. She was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 2016 for her leadership in the development of technologies to enable areal density increases in hard disk drives and was elected as a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors in 2018. Dr. Hipwell is currently a Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station Eminent Professor and Director of INVENT Lab (INnoVation tools and Entrepreneurial New Technology) where she works to help students, faculty, and companies get technology developed and to market faster. Dr. Hipwell started the Grace Hopper Women Innovators Program, has developed and taught innovation and technology development coursework, and is currently working on a student and faculty development program to improve Ph.D. student preparation for impact in industry. Dr. Hipwell is also active in mentoring, chairing the J. Mike Walker '66 Mechanical Engineering Mentoring Committee and mentoring student/faculty teams in technology commercialization programs.

2018 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient

Professor Huyen Pham has served as a Professor of Law for ten years, the past five of which have been at Texas A&M



University. From 2013 to 2016, she also served as Associate Dean for Faculty Research and Development at the Law School. Professor Huyen Pham's scholarship focuses on immigration law. As one of the first legal scholars to recognize the significance of the subfederal immigration regulation (immigration regulation by states, cities, and counties) that grew after the 9/11 attacks, Professor Pham has written extensively about the doctrinal and policy implications of this regulation. Her research has been published by some of the nation's most prestigious legal academic journals, including the New York University Law Review and the Georgetown Law Journal. Judicial courts and media outlets have cited Professor Pham's research, and she has been invited to present her work at a myriad of academic venues and in front of legislative bodies, including the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and Vietnam's National Assembly in Hanoi. Professor

Pham's work has been groundbreaking in another way as she was one of the first women, and one of the first women of color, to make a significant contribution to the study of immigration law. The community of immigration law scholars has become rich with gender and racial diversity, and Professor Pham was a pioneer and role model for this new generation of scholars. Born in Vietnam, Professor Pham arrived in the United States as an unaccompanied refugee child. From these unlikely roots, she graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Law School, both with honors. Her work experience includes volunteering in a Vietnamese refugee camp as an Echoing Green Fellow, clerking with a federal judge, and stints as an assistant attorney general and a corporate lawyer. Professor Pham brings her wealth of experience, and her underlying passions for public service, social justice, and international development to her teaching and to her mentoring of students.

2014 Eminent Scholar Award

Dr. Yvonna S. Lincoln holds the Ruth Harrington Chair of Educational Leadership and the title of University



Distinguished Professor of Higher Education at Texas A&M University. Dr. Lincoln is the author or editor of more than one dozen books, 75 book chapters, and 70 journal articles in the area of higher education, alternative paradigm inquiry, and qualitative research methods. She is a scholar-practitioner who not only develops theory and conducts conducting edge research, she also devotes her time to mentorship and giving back to her profession. Since joining Texas A&M University 23 years ago, Dr. Lincoln has received numerous national and international awards in recognition of her exceptional achievements in research, teaching, and mentoring of young faculty and students. She is one of the most cited scholars in the entire world. Her scholarly contributions both in the field of higher education administration and in the field of qualitative research methodology has brought to her and to Texas A&M University international recognition. (Dr. Lincoln retired from the University in 2014).

2013 Eminent Scholar Award

Dr. Deborah Bell-Pedersen currently serves as the Thomas D. McKnight Professor and



Associate Department Head in the Department of Biology in the College of Sciences. She received a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from the State University of New York Albany in 1991 and completed a postdoctoral placement in the Department of Biochemistry at the Dartmouth Medical School. Her scholarly work focuses on how circadian rhythms regulate daily rhythms in behavior, physiology, and biochemistry; and how defects of the human clock are associated with sleep disorders, epilepsy, cerebrovascular disease, multiple sclerosis, headaches, cardiovascular disease, and cancer. She has a robust research program with more than \$10 million in past funding. Effective in 2013, Dr. Pedersen had 55 peer reviewed publications and had guest-edited numerous special journal issues. She had also authored 8 book chapters. With respect to teaching, Dr. Pedersen has

developed three new courses and she teaches seven other courses. She has previously received the Association of Former Students' Distinguished Teaching Award. She is active in national service, has been strongly rewarded by the university and her colleagues in the field of biochemistry, and she gives lectures around the U.S. and internationally each year.

2012 Eminent Scholar Award

Dr. Kim Dunbar is an exceptionally strong scholar with an international reputation. She was



successful very early in her career, climbing from Assistant to full Professor in 5 years. She was recruited to A&M in 1999 as a full professor and in 2004 became the first woman in the College of Science to receive a named Chair. She currently holds the Davison Chair and is a University Distinguished Professor. Among Dr. Dunbar's strengths is her written scholarship. By 2012, she had accrued 310 publications. She had also authored 14 book chapters and was serving as Associate Editor for Inorganic Chemistry, the top journal in the field. She has also guest edited four journal special issues. She has lectured around the world and is known for her support and mentoring of minority students and young women. She has chaired committees for over 35 doctoral and master's students. She has received dozens of honors as a faculty member, including the inaugural Graduate Mentoring Award from The Association of Former Students and in 2012, the AFS Distinguished Achievement Award in Research. Since receiving the Eminent Scholar Award, Dr. Dunbar has provided invited lectures in four different countries and, in 2015, she received the ACS Award for Distinguished Service in the Advancement of Inorganic Chemistry.