



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 women faculty at Texas A&M University. The Award honors the role these extraordinary women play in serving as models for all women students at the University. The Award is bestowed annually on women from a wide range of disciplines and gives witness to the extraordinary contributions that women 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 women faculty.
- *The award honors accomplished faculty with clearly demonstrated eminence in their field, who are also exemplary role models for women's success, as demonstrated by a clear record of excellence in teaching, mentoring, and service, especially to 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).
- The Dean of Faculties Office is the point of contact for the ESA as they manage processes for all faculty awards at the University.
- Previous recipients of the award are listed below.

Eligibility for the Award

- Women who are tenured full professors and have been on the faculty at 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 clear record of excellence in teaching, mentoring, and service, especially to women students.

Prior Recipients of the Eminent Scholar Award

- **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.



- **2013 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient**

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. Pederson 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 science, 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.



- **2014 Eminent Scholar Award Recipient**



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).

- **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.

- **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.