

This announcement is not embargoed, but AAAS plans to release it immediately prior to the 2013 AAAS Annual Meeting:

Contact: Katharine Zambon, AAAS,
202-326-6434, kzambon@aaas.org

**6:30 p.m. EST
Wednesday, February 13 2013**

2012 AAAS Mentor Award Goes to Dr. Cato T. Laurencin of the University of Connecticut

The 2012 Mentor Award of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) will be presented to Dr. Cato T. Laurencin “for his transformative impact and scientific contributions toward mentoring students in the field of biomedical engineering.”

Dr. Laurencin is the Albert and Wilda Van Dusen Distinguished Chair Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Professor of Chemical, Materials and Biomolecular Engineering at the University of Connecticut. The Director of both the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Center, and the Institute for Regenerative Engineering at the University of Connecticut, he is one of only two designated University Professors at the school.

Throughout his distinguished career, Dr. Laurencin has taken significant steps to ensure that the impact of his pioneering work in biomaterials and tissue engineering benefits both the research community and, through his mentoring, future scientists and engineers. “His track record as an advocate for and a mentor to under-represented minority students, teachers, and faculty is exemplary,” said Yolanda S. George, deputy director of Education and Human Resources at AAAS. “Over the past 22 years, more than 90 under-represented minority students at the undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate levels have undertaken research projects in his various institutional laboratories.”

Most recently, Dr. Laurencin has mentored seven former trainees, including four under-represented minorities (one woman and three African-Americans), who now hold tenured faculty positions in biomedical engineering. “Considering that only a handful of African-Americans hold tenure-track appointments in biomedical engineering nationally,” George said, “it is difficult to overstate the impact that Dr. Laurencin has had on diversity in this field.”

“Dr. Laurencin was an outstanding candidate for this award not only because of the impact that his scientific contributions have made within the fields of medicine and engineering, but also the impact his life has made on hundreds of engineers, scientists, and physicians he has helped, trained, and mentored,” said Gerard Boulin, AAAS senior project coordinator.

Dr. Laurencin received his B.S.E. degree in chemical engineering from Princeton University, and his Ph.D. degree in biochemical engineering/biotechnology from MIT. He also holds an M.D. degree, *magna cum laude*, from Harvard Medical School. He is an internationally recognized leader in the field of musculoskeletal tissue regeneration, and he has received numerous honors including the Presidential Faculty Fellow Award from former U.S. President Bill Clinton, and in 2010, the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and

Engineering Mentoring from President Barack Obama. He is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, and an elected member of the National Academy of Engineering.

Established by the AAAS Board of Directors in 1996, the Mentor Award honors AAAS members who have mentored significant numbers of underrepresented students (women, minorities, and persons with disabilities) toward a Ph.D. degree in the sciences, as well as scholarship, activism, and community-building on behalf of underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields.

The AAAS Mentor Award will be presented to Dr. Laurencin during the 179th AAAS Annual Meeting in Boston, MA, February 14-18, 2013. A ceremony and reception will be held in the Republic Ballroom of the Sheraton Boston Hotel on Friday, February 15 at 6:30 p.m.

CONTACTS: Dr. Laurencin, winner of the 2012 AAAS Mentor Award, can be reached at via email at Laurencin@uchc.edu

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The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is the world's largest general scientific society, and publisher of the journal, *Science* (www.sciencemag.org) as well as *Science Translational Medicine* (www.sciencetranslationalmedicine.org) and *Science Signaling* (www.sciencesignaling.org). AAAS was founded in 1848, and includes some 261 affiliated societies and academies of science, serving 10 million individuals. *Science* has the largest paid circulation of any peer-reviewed general science journal in the world, with an estimated total readership of 1 million. The non-profit AAAS (www.aaas.org) is open to all and fulfills its mission to "advance science and serve society" through initiatives in science policy; international programs; science education; and more. For the latest research news, log onto EurekAlert!, www.eurekalert.org, the premier science-news Web site, a service of AAAS. For more information on AAAS awards, see www.aaas.org/aboutaaas/awards/.

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