



NEWS RELEASE

CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

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Joan A. Steitz to Receive 2015 Connecticut Medal of Science

Rocky Hill, CT — Professor Joan A. Steitz has been selected as the 2015 recipient of the Connecticut Medal of Science for her pioneering work in understanding the structure and function of RNA. She will accept the award at the 40th Annual Meeting & Dinner of the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE) on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at the Crowne Plaza Cromwell Hotel.

Steitz is an international leader in describing the molecular events involved in creation of messenger RNA (mRNA). Insights from her work have led to numerous research areas related to human health, including cancer, and autoimmune and infectious diseases. She continues to explore RNA in her laboratory at Yale, currently researching noncoding RNAs, including microRNAs.

“The State of Connecticut is proud to award the Connecticut Medal of Science to Joan Steitz who has made seminal contributions to the field of biology through her pioneering work in RNA research,” said Governor Dannel P. Malloy. “I am particularly pleased to note that Professor Steitz is the first woman to receive the medal.”

In addition to her scientific accomplishments, Professor Steitz is a dedicated teacher of biochemistry to Yale undergraduates and a mentor and research advisor to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. She is recognized for her commitment to the training and advancement of women scientists, in particular, and her inspired leadership led to a renaissance at Yale that made the Department of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry one of nation’s strongest in molecular biology.

A graduate of the Antioch College, Steitz holds a PhD in biochemistry and molecular biology from Harvard University. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering, the National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Medicine. Steitz has authored more than 300 papers and has been the recipient of over 60 awards and honors, including the National Medal of Science (1986).

The Connecticut Medal of Science is the state’s highest honor for scientific achievement in fields crucial to Connecticut’s economic competitiveness and social well-being. Modeled after the National Medal of Science, this award is bestowed by the State of Connecticut, with the assistance of the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering, in alternate years with the Connecticut Medal of Technology. Visit <http://www.ctcase.org/medals.html> to see a list of past winners.

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