

CITIZENS FOR NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS

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2021 CNTA Nuclear Service Award Winner Announced

Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) is pleased to announce that the winner of the 2021 Nuclear Service Award is Dr. Melvin (Mel) Buckner. This prestigious award was announced on October 28, 2021 at the 30th Annual Teller Lecture and Banquet held in Aiken, SC.

Dr. Buckner enjoyed a distinguished career at the Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) for over three decades. He received his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. in Nuclear Engineering from the University of Tennessee. He is noted for his expertise and leadership in nuclear fuel cycle related technologies, including safety and physics analysis methods for heavy water reactors, the establishment of advanced computer systems, the accelerator production of tritium and nuclear hydrogen production, and educational efforts in nuclear science, engineering, and technology. He produced more than 65 publications on diverse topics ranging from nuclear hydrogen production and plutonium disposition to nonproliferation policy and waste management.

Dr. Buckner's impactful leadership was felt on numerous programs and initiatives at the Savannah River Site. These included the K Reactor Restart, the Tritium Source Program including the Accelerator Production of Tritium Project and the Commercial Light Water Reactor Program, the Plutonium Disposition Program, the Nuclear Energy Research Initiative Project, and the Nuclear Hydrogen Initiative. Dr. Buckner was also the Program Manager for SRNL University Relations and Nuclear Programs.

After his retirement from SRNL, Dr. Buckner was an Adjunct Professor of Nuclear Engineering at the University of South Carolina from 2006 to 2012. He led the formation of the Southeastern Universities Reactors Institute for Science and Education (SUNRISE), consulted with SRNL, and served on the Savannah River Nuclear Solutions transition team in 2008. He continues to share his knowledge with the public as an independent nuclear columnist for the Augusta Chronicle and The State newspapers.

Dr. Buckner is an active member of CNTA and the American Nuclear Society (ANS). He was chairman of the CNTA Education Committee, co-founder of the Southeastern Summer Nuclear Institute, member of the Speakers' Bureau, and a former member of the CNTA Board of Directors. He has served on the ANS Board of Directors, served as Chairman of the ANS President's Special Committee on Nuclear Nonproliferation, and received an ANS Presidential Citation for his contributions to the Society's nonproliferation focus. Dr. Buckner's work on nonproliferation issues is highlighted by his preparation of relevant ANS Position Statements and related features in Nuclear News.

"It is long overdue and fitting that this year's award recognizes Mel's lifetime achievements in applying nuclear technology, advancing education in nuclear technology, increasing public awareness of the

benefits of nuclear technology and in promoting and defending the safe and effective use of nuclear technology,” said Kevin O’Kula, ANS Savannah River Section Program and Scholarship Chair.

“Dr. Buckner has committed his professional and retired career to the advancement of the nuclear industry as well as nuclear education,” said Marissa Reigel, R&D Execution Manager for Actinide Materials Science and Technology at SRNL. “Mel has made a lasting impact on nuclear technology and education both in the CSRA and nationally.”

The Nuclear Service Award is presented annually to recognize accomplishments in applying nuclear technology, advancing education in nuclear technology, increasing public awareness of the benefits of nuclear technology, and in promoting and defending the safe and effective use of nuclear technology.

CNTA is an Aiken-based charitable educational organization dedicated to providing factual information about nuclear topics and educating the public on nuclear issues. For further information, call CNTA at 803-649-3456 or e-mail at cnta@bellsouth.net.