

CITIZENS FOR NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS

1204 Whiskey Road, Suite B, Aiken, SC 29803

(803) 649-3456 / www.CNTAaware.com

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Contact: Jim Marra
(803) 649-3456

2022 Fred C. Davison Distinguished Scientist Award Winner Announced

Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) is pleased to announce that the winner of the 2022 Fred C. Davison Distinguished Scientist Award is Dr. M. John Plodinec. This prestigious award was announced on November 1, 2022, at the 31st Annual Teller Lecture and Banquet held in Aiken, SC.

Dr. Plodinec is an internationally recognized expert in nuclear waste characterization and disposition. He influenced every aspect of the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) from waste characterization, canister closure proof testing, and the facility's \$40 million product qualification program. He prepared the technical case used by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to declare vitrification the Best Demonstrated Available Technology for High Level Waste (HLW) and authored the Waste Acceptance Product Specifications governing all HLW glass products in the United States. He regularly consults with the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

Dr. Plodinec received his B.A. in Chemistry from Franklin and Marshall College in 1968 and his Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry from the University of Florida in 1974. At the Savannah River Site, he held various positions from 1974 to 1997 including Manager and Senior Advisory Scientist in charge of the Glass Technology Group. From 1997 to 2005 he was the Director of Diagnostic Instrumentation and Analysis Laboratory at Mississippi State University. From 2005 to 2010 he was a Science Advisor at the Savannah River National Laboratory. Most recently, he served as the Vice Chair for the National Academies of Science and Engineering committee supporting the DOE Environmental Management waste cleanup program and as a Technical Director for the Alliance for National and Community Resilience.

Dr. Plodinec's work is internationally recognized. He organized a team under the US-Argentina Technical Exchange agreement to demonstrate the destruction of reactor ion exchange resins via vitrification; assisted the Indian glass and foundry industry to convert from coal to natural gas to protect the Taj Mahal; and prepared recommendations to the Estonian government for the clean up of contamination at the notorious Sillamae site.

Dr. Plodinec is the author of *Assessment of Science and Technology for the Department of Energy's Defense Environmental Cleanup Program* from the National Academies Press, wrote book chapters in two other volumes, and published more than 250 scholarly articles and government research reports. He is a recipient of the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Clusters from the U.S. Army, a Fellow in the American Ceramic Society, and the winner of a NATO Fellowship.

"Thanks to John's tireless efforts and others in the central engineering group, we loaded the first glass-filled canister into the glass waste storage building ahead of schedule and under budget," said former

DWPF Project Manager David Amerine. “I found his keen insights, affable manner, and quick wit a pleasure as well as a benefit. John is a national treasure.”

“In addition to John’s many scientific and programmatic contributions, he was also an excellent mentor. In particular, he was an early, and avid, advocate for women in technical positions,” said Savannah River National Laboratory Contracts Manager Amy Ramsey. “Many professional women at SRNL, active and retired, benefited from his recognition and support.”

The Distinguished Scientist Award is presented annually to recognize regional scientists and engineers who have made exceptional lifetime scientific achievements. The award is in honor of Dr. Fred C. Davison who was Chairman of CNTA’s Board of Directors from 1994 until his death in 2004.

Davison was President of the University of Georgia for 19 years where he encouraged math and science education and managed the doubling of graduate enrollment. Davison was also President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Science Center Foundation, President of the Georgia-Carolina Boy Scouts Council, an elder at Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, and an active Rotarian.

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.

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Caption: Dr. Kathryn Huff, Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy, gives the keynote address during the 2021 Teller Lecture at the Amentum Center for Performing Arts.